

# YRC JOURNAL

THE YORKSHIRE RAMBLERS CLUB est 1892

MOUNTAINEERING & CAVING ETC

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OBERGABELHORN FROM DENT BLANCHE  
PHOTO RICHARD GOWING



# The Yorkshire Ramblers Club

Established 1892

The mountaineering and caving club

The Club aims;

to organise caving, mountaineering,  
walking and skiing excursions and expeditions,  
to encourage the exploration of caves, potholes  
and the more remote parts of the world  
and

to gather and promote knowledge of natural history,  
archaeology, folklore and kindred subjects



Low Hall Garth  
Club cottage  
Little Langdale  
Cumbria

Lowstern  
Club cottage  
Clapham  
North Yorkshire



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## **LOWSTERN**

As we approach the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the acquisition of Lowstern members may be interested in the article covering the event which was penned by Cliff Downham in the journal of that year.

The idea of a second Y.R.C. hut developed out of discussions amongst members generally about the establishment of a suitable memorial to Crosby Fox, the Leader of the Y.R.C. 1957 Himalayan Expedition so tragically killed in an avalanche. However it was later felt that, as Fox was an accomplished mountaineer rather than a pot-holer, some other form of memorial to him was preferable, but nevertheless the idea of a hut in the limestone area of Craven persisted and received the approval of the Committee. It is surely fitting that the Club which pioneered pot-holing and caving in this part of the country should have a permanent base in Craven.

A sub-committee was formed and it was on a bitterly cold Sunday in February, 1958 that possible and impossible buildings were inspected. Not until after a fortifying lunch did our Clapham member John Lovett recall that the old and derelict hut known as " The Golf House " at Clapham might be worthy of consideration, so it was to this edifice that the sub-committee ventured forth.

The situation was superb; approached by its own drive from the Bentham road, a quarter of a mile out of Clapham village, standing secluded in a small plantation, entirely private and with a glorious uninterrupted view south over the rolling hills of Bowland, it was an ideal spot. The Lowstern Plantation is marked on the One Inch Ordnance Map, Grid Reference 732691.

On the hut itself opinion was sharply divided. The Architects and Surveyors in the Club viewed the rusty and dilapidated structure with a critical eye, with mutterings of rot, both wet and dry, and other technicalities of which lesser mortals were blissfully ignorant, but all agreed that the site was perfect. That a terrific amount of work was necessary to make the place habitable and worthy of the Y.R.C. was tactfully not mentioned!

The hut and its grounds comprised part of the Ingleborough Estate, thus the possibility of buying

or renting was somewhat doubtful, but a hopeful approach was made to the Lord of the Manor, Dr. J. A. Farrer.

At this point one realised the high regard in which our predecessors of the Y.R.C. are held and on what secure foundations the Club was built. Dr. Farrer immediately gave the project his blessing and was kind enough to say that as the Yorkshire Ramblers had for so long been closely connected with the Farrer family we could go ahead immediately. Unfortunately, owing to the ramifications of the Estate, outright purchase was not possible but Dr. Farrer agreed to a long lease at a purely nominal rent.

The Legal Department of the Club then swung into action as did also the general body of members; finally even the Treasurer was noticeably enthusiastic but perhaps this was due to the influence of the President- what a good thing it was that in the year 1958 the President, Stanley Marsden, was one and the same person as the Treasurer!

An appeal for donations to the hut fund was opened and, as always, the response was most gratifying; the Club will be eternally grateful to those many members who helped to provide much-needed and costly equipment.

The Hut is a bungalow containing five rooms; these immediately suggested a layout of two dormitories (containing eventually twelve bunks), a common room, kitchen, bathroom and an annexe for clothes. Plans included showers with hot and cold water and full cooking facilities; all these things have now come to pass.

Adaptations and extensive repairs started after Whitsuntide 1958 and up to the end of the summer of 1959 scarcely a weekend passed without members working on the Hut. Just how the ambitious construction of a septic tank for flush lavatories came into being remains a mystery, but one recalls a young member of the Club, known affectionately by the name less polite than that of Sewage Engineer, wandering about with rolls of plans under his arm, and finally the inhuman glee with which he watched slave labour digging a monstrous hole some eight feet in diameter and nine feet deep to house a prefabricated concrete tank.

All this work went with a tremendous swing and great enthusiasm; superhuman efforts succeeded in making the Hut presentable for an official opening at the After-Dinner Meet in November, 1958, and it was surely fitting that the Club's Oldest Member and doyen of pot-holers, no less a person than Ernest E. Roberts, should perform the opening ceremony.

A crowd of about eighty members and friends had assembled in the Hut grounds when the newly elected President, John Godley, mounted the steps leading to the Front Door of the Hut. In a brief speech he outlined the efforts which had led up to the acquisition of the Hut, he went on to make a strong plea for care in pot-holing. There was no virtue, he said, in getting into difficulties underground, the Club possessed both the tackle and the experience to make trouble unnecessary. He urged younger Members to take the greatest possible care and not to be afraid to ask for advice. He then introduced our Landlord, Dr. J. A. Farrer of Ingleborough who, in a few happy words of welcome, made it clear that both Landlord and Tenants were more pleased with each other than is normally the case!



## **GOING BACK EVEN FURTHER ..... NIDDERDALE: 1893 & 1895**

Much of the very early exploration done by the YRC was recorded in the Leeds newspapers which are now very difficult to find. The copies in the British Library at Colindale, are deemed to be so fragile that they are not made available to researchers.

The Leeds Reference Library does not have the issues of the newspaper but it does have them on microfilms. After initial enquiries by Steve Craven, Dave North of the Craven Pothole Club did produce some photocopies from them, but the microfilm quality was poor and the photocopies were unreadable. He did however manage to take digital photographs from issues of the newspaper that are held at the Yorkshire Archaeological Society in Leeds.

Articles were found in the following publications but that only started another conundrum

Leeds Mercury Weekly Supplement 03/06/1893 p. 8  
Leeds Mercury Weekly Supplement 15/06/1895 p. 8

Roberts then took his stand on the steps, it was obviously a proud moment for him and everybody listened with delight to his characteristic speech, packed with humour, anecdote and sound common sense. True to his pet hobby of exploding fallacies he insisted that he was not a founder member of the Club but belonged to what he called the "second wave." He paid handsome tribute to the early stalwarts, Fred and Matt Botterill, Tom Booth, Parsons, Gray and Green and others who made the foundations of the Y.R.C. and laid down the principles of potholing technique. He hoped that the Y.R.C. would never slavishly follow fashions, and he could not resist a passing swipe at rock-climbers who encumber themselves with ironmongery "it must be a great impediment."

He then declared the Hut open, unlocked the door with an enormous "eighteen carrot" gold key, flung it wide and invited members to come in after the President had smashed a bottle of champagne on the steps. There is no doubt that the Hut, "this building of character," now thoroughly equipped and luxuriously comfortable, will prove a great acquisition for the Club.

They were written by "Tudor Y.R.C." but does anyone know the identity of Tudor?

We have a comprehensive list of members going back to the formation of the Club but can find no trace of this man.

Given that the YRC had an extreme aversion to publicity in the early days it is believed that if any member had written for the newspapers it would have been strongly condemned; it is possible that 'Tudor' was a nom de plume, particularly as no Christian name was used. Looking at the names of early members, there is none that leads obviously to 'Tudor' as a nom de plume.

One clue perhaps can be found in our own library. The catalogue includes;

Tudor, T L 'The High Peak to Sherwood: the hills and dales of old Mercia', 1926.

T L Tudor also revised the Bibliographic Index of British Flora in 1929, wrote on 'Ancient Monuments of Derbyshire' in 1936 and at about the same time 'New Light on Duffield Church'

There is also record of a Rev T L Tudor Fitzjohn working on historic churches in the Shropshire area in 1889. None of this can directly link anyone to the YRC so the mystery remains.

Studying the output one suggestion is that the author may be Samuel Cuttriss who joined the Club in the year of its formation and was the first to treat cave and pothole explorations from a scientific point of view, and to make permanent records by photograph and plan. But long before that, he had been very active and had done what was possible in exploring caves.

He was an engineer by profession in the days when to be an engineer was to have many facets. He is credited with having produced the first electric motor made in Leeds. From 1908 he was involved in gold mining in the wilder parts of Northern Russia and Siberia, which can be read about in YRC Journal Vols. 3 and 4.

Cutriss was renowned for his green bag of apparatus which was prominent in all the great achievements of the first wave of potholers. He was a geologist, writing several papers for the Yorkshire Geological and the Leeds Geological Societies and a member of the Underground Waters Committee. His 'Notes on Caves' have been bound for the Library. However he died 25th April, 1932, aged 73 and T.L.Tudor could not have been his nom de plume unless that person's later works were issued posthumously.

The items in question record in detail YRC explorations in Manchester Hole and Goyden Pot which do not appear in our Journals and will stand an outing.

#### THE CAVES OF UPPER NIDDERDALE

'Tudor' Y.R.C.

Owing to the distance at which it lies from Pateley Bridge, the upper part of the Nidd valley about and beyond Lofthouse and Middlesmoor, is not so well known, as is the portion readily accessible by railway. To the pedestrian it offers a splendid field for wild and romantic excursions. Our object this visit was to become more thoroughly acquainted with the caves for which the locality is noted, especially with Goyden Pot, Tom Taylor's cave at How Stean, and Eglin Hole.

Having secured good rooms at a farm just to the east of the church of St.Chad's. which is the first

building in Middlesmoor reached on climbing the hill from Lofthouse, we took up our quarters on Saturday evening, after a crowded railway journey from Leeds to Pateley, and a wet drive further up the valley.

The Prospect from the windows was magnificent, commanding the vale of the Nidd in one grand stretch of green pastures and woods down to Pateley. In a few years the portion between Ramsgill and Gowthwaite Hall will be covered by the new reservoir about to be constructed by the Bradford Corporation. On either side the plain is flanked by the spurs of the hills in grand succession as far as Greenhow Hill and Heyshaw Moor. Opposite our house stood a magnificent chestnut tree, and in the evening when the sun was sinking in the west a pipe and chat under its leafy shade in contemplation of the exquisite scene made a fitting termination to a hard day's ramble. A mile below is Lofthouse, and, with the exception of Ramsgill, three miles away, no other hamlet of any size breaks the view to Pateley Bridge. Trees are plentiful, and a silver streak, visible at intervals, marks the course of the Nidd.

Our first day's work commenced with a visit to How Stean. The lower portion of the How Stean Beck, shortly before it joins the Nidd, passes through a very narrow and deep gorge of limestone, much resembling a tiny canyon. In many places it is over fifty feet deep, and the noise of the water, often invisible from above is highly impressive. This portion has been enclosed and walks and bridges have been constructed at convenient places, and a charge for admission is made.

The wild flowers were plentiful and various, and the trees have never been so forward.

After a pleasant walk through the grounds, we returned to Tom Taylor's cave, which may be entered above or below the path, ladders affording a means of examining the hollows at the entrance. On passing farther into the cave the passage becomes narrower and lofty: but nowhere presents any difficulty. Just before emerging, a narrow opening to the left offers a scramble up nearly to the surface, where a faint gleam of daylight is visible. The main passage terminates in a field in a clump of trees, surrounded by a semi-circular wall to keep the cattle from tumbling into the hollow. Due west and about fifty yards from the exit of the last cave a small gate in the rocks marks the entrance to Cathole.

The first portion is rather low, and necessitates a little stooping. To the right a low passage, containing two or three thick stalactitic pillars, continues for about as hundred yards until it becomes too low for comfortable progression. Immediately in front the main passage leads directly under the hill towards Middlesmoor. It is broad and low, and we found it fairly clean. The floor is covered with fallen masses and slabs of rock which looked an intense shiny black by the light of our candles and an occasional flare up from magnesium ribbon. A stream of water is at times encountered but nowhere is it of any size. About two hundred yards from the entrance a sharp turn led due east and we proceeded for a considerable distance without encountering anything to break the monotony of its character. The roof became uncomfortably low, and it was decided to return, and accordingly we shuffled over the soft debris and fallen rocks to our starting-point. To the left leading westward there is another opening, which is, however, of no great length.

Emerging into the sunlight we kept along the left bank of How Stean Beck for a time, and then descended to the bed of the stream, which afforded a delightful scramble amongst tessellated floors of limestone and huge boulders. Both sides are fringed with trees covered with the new-born green of spring. A constant succession of delightful nooks and cascades drew our admiration, and exquisite velvety carpets of soft, green moss (plentifully interspersed with oak fern) fringed the banks. At length millstone grit appeared, and the left gill brought us to Park Foss, and beyond the bare, brown moors lead to the ridge summit of Riggs Moor from which a magnificent view of Great Whernside and Little Whernside is obtained. The hills in Wharfedale beyond Burnsall were plainly seen to the south.

A heavy shower now came on, and the long grass was soon saturated. The storm quickly passed, and we struck across the moor due north and down to Angram, the last tiny hamlet in Nidderdale. We obtained some milk, and I was struck with a reply on this occasion which I received no fewer than three times during our visit. When I asked how much there was to pay. "What you please, sir." On paying what was reasonable and usual, no thanks were offered, and a feeling of dissatisfaction seemed to be roused. It may be due to want of familiarity with tourists; but it is certainly an

unpleasant trait, and it would be more satisfactory to fix a charge, and not leave it to the discretion of the tourist.

From Angram it is nearly five miles of rough walking over the Rain Stang to Middlesmoor, and we encountered another heavy shower on the crest of the moor. A wash and a good dinner soon put us all on very good terms with ourselves, and a beautiful evening filled us with hopeful expectations of a fine day on the morrow.

In the morning, provided with a lantern, magnesium wire, and some candles, we proceeded to Goyden Pot, situated in the bed of the Nidd two miles above Lofthouse. It is variously written Goydon, Cowdon etc. As pronounced in the district, it sounds to me like Gudden Pot. Just before reaching Lofthouse, from Pateley, a considerable stream of water is observed flowing into the valley on the low side of the road; but on looking to the right no water or stream is visible. The road runs over a low arch of limestone, which is the termination of the subterranean course of the river. From Manchester Hole, about three hundred yards above Goyden Pot, to this reappearance of the river must be over two miles. The bed of the river, which lies between, is for the first mile or so much like the upper part of How Stean, and contains a little water; but towards the famous Pot it is simply a rough heap of great boulders, and there is no water until the farm is passed, beyond which, on the right hand, is a low limestone cliff, at whose foot the entrance to Goyden Pot lies over great boulders, and along an airy passage with a creviced and uneven floor. About fifty yards from the mouth the main entrance terminates in a steep cliff about 20 feet high, overhanging the waters of the Nidd, whose roaring for a time inspires one with a feeling of nervousness. Retreating a few yards, a low arch above a heap of rubble is found on the left hand. In a few paces the great chamber is entered above a barrier of rocks, and the descent to the river itself is easily accomplished. Having plenty of lights, and becoming somewhat familiarised with the awful din, we prepared to become more thoroughly acquainted with this great cavern.

Those entering Goyden Pot for the first time should note carefully the path in entering, as a little difficulty in finding the way back may not prove a pleasant experience to a novice.

Descending on the loose debris and over a few large rocks, a low bridge of limestone is reached, under which the water disappears. Climbing over this, a drop of seven or eight feet brings the cave-hunter to a ledge beyond which progress is difficult without ropes and a ladder. The bright light of the magnesium ribbon revealed the tossing water beneath and fearsome depths beyond. On regaining the slope of soft debris, further progress may be made to the right over the rocks under the projecting side of the cavern to a kind of couloir full of sand and a few branches of trees washed in by the river in flood. At the bottom of the couloir a cup-shaped hollow gives out on to a cliff, which is rather steep and slippery, As far as we could judge, it seemed about 20 feet high; and it is not advisable to continue the investigation further without a ladder and some rope. By these appliances, the stream has been traced for a considerable distance past this point until the water approaches so close to the roof that further progress is prevented. When we got back to the main gallery we explored two branch passages which are seen on entering on the left hand. The first is choked with light sand and pebbles; the lower one is packed tightly with branches and roots of trees, showing the great power of the subterranean river.

Emerging into daylight once more, we lunched by the well in the glade between Goyden Pot and Manchester Hole.

The dry bed of the Nidd soon after leaving the cliff gives place to a small pool, and the river appears as an ordinary stream of water. Across the bed at the side of the pool a hole about two feet square receives much of the water which makes its way under the hill to Goyden Pot, except in heavy flood time. This is Manchester Hole, and the passage may be examined by stepping over the rails a few yards to the right into the wood, where a steep hole leads directly to the stream. To the left there is not much to be seen; but to the right the passage may be traversed for some distance, especially after a drought like the one we have experienced this year. A few yards from the entrance down stream an opening appears overhead, through which the green branches of the trees are visible.

Returning to the surface, we found that the afternoon was nearly gone, so we turned in for another look at Goyden Pot, which seemed to have

fascinated us and then climbed up to the little hill village to discuss our well earned dinner.

A glorious sunny day was succeeded by a beautiful evening, and as we walked down to Adel Close we could not but remark how many and how various were the songs of birds which filled the copses and trees around us. In the second field beyond the farm and close to How Stean, a stile leads to a break in the bank. By means of a ladder a ledge of rock is reached, on which a small gate leads into a low passage known as Eglin Hole. It seems to run parallel with the walls of the How Stein gorge. Roots are plentiful, and now and then a gleam of daylight is visible. The opening is narrow, and the floor very dirty. Some distance from the entrance a huge, piece of stone divides the path, which, however, unites again immediately, and then the floor, is wetter and muddier than ever. Presently the roof sinks to a low arch about six feet long and scarcely two feet high. Scrambling along this through a few inches of water brought us to a better portion, which in turn offered other difficulties. Two low barriers of calcareous deposit damned the water up to nearly knee-deep, and as far as we could see the pool continued for a considerable distance, and there was no alternative, but to wade so we made our way with difficulty to the outer world. There were many small stalactites, but not of the marble column-like beauty of those in Stump Cross or Clapham Cave.

With the visit to Eglin Hole our cave work was brought to a close but there is much to be done by visitors to Upper Nidderdale. The ladies of our party were enchanted with the district, and thoroughly enjoyed the rough work over the moors and the scrambling in the caves.

Directly east of Middlesmoor, Lofthouse Moor rises to a height of 1.450 feet and may be easily climbed in half an hour. The view is extensive, and embraces all upper reaches of the Nidd up to the great masses of the two Whernsides. It was easy to pick out our routes and the places visited during our visit. Some years ago I walked over these mountains to Kettlewell, and can recommend this walk to lovers of a rough scramble.

Close to the confluence of the Nidd with How Stean Beck, the main river is joined by Blayshaw Beck, and it is an enjoyable excursion to follow the stream up into the heart of Stone Moor. At first it is simply a dry heap of stones and small boulders.



Just before reaching the old mill and little bridge, the stream appears, and for some distance there is a succession of small cascades and deep pools, past the old mine and through steep banks clothed with oak and thousands of fern plumes. Many of the dead trunks remind one of the Valley of Desolation. Higher up great boulders and trees torn from their roots by heavy rains add to the wildness of the scene. Twisted thorns and mountain ash, in one or two instances closely intergrown with beech take the place of the oak trees, and these at length disappear and the bare sides of the moor, the sky, and the rocky stream are the sole components of the scene. From this point, by walking westward, another stream may be struck, and this in turn followed down to How Stean.

From this article it will be evident that to an industrious tramp the Upper Nidd affords a week of varied and interesting work, of which the caves will prove not the least attractive. There are two comfortable hotels in Middlesmoor

#### MANCHESTER HOLE

"Tudor" Y.R.C., writes

Whitsuntide this year (1895 Ed.) saw a strong gathering of Yorkshire ramblers at that comfortable hostelry the King's Head, at Middlesmoor, in Upper Nidderdale. The chief purpose of this assembly was to make an attempt to reach the inner recesses of Goyden Pot, the fearsome cavern which leads into the ordinary subterranean course of the Nidd. Arrangements were made in good time, and old boots and clothes, with ropes, candles, and magnesium ribbon provided for a determined assault on the Stygian course of the hidden river. Alas! On the day of departure for the campaign rain fell heavily, and on the next day a more persistent fall succeeded, which tended to damp our enthusiasm.

In the morning, when the little army of invaders reached the mouth of Goyden Pot our worst fears were realised. The usually dry bed of the Nidd was a rushing torrent, and from the throat of the pot hole a dull roar betokened the turmoil within. A few keen spirits roped and crept along the left-hand ledge a few yards into the tunnel; but extreme caution was necessary. A slip from the slippery shelf into the rushing water would have meant a thorough wetting, although no catastrophe could result with the Alpine rope securely tied and held.

Disappointed, the procession trooped off up the river to Manchester Hole, nearly 300 yards farther up stream. At the bottom of the wood an irregular shaped hole opens directly over the waterway which constitutes the course of the Nidd when not in flood. Roping, and lighting our lamps and candles, we waded along the first portion of the stream for about eighty feet to a heap of silt about six feet high. From this point the passage turns sharply to the left, and the right-hand side is strewn with oblong blocks of fallen limestone for some yards. The general form of the opening is square, and with occasional shallows had an average depth of water of about a foot. Presently two great hanging stalactites like folded curtains are passed on the right, and again a little farther on a projecting lump on the opposite side suggests a sheep's head. The general direction from the elbow for nearly 300 feet is a great curve trending southwards. This terminates in a vast chamber with a perfectly level roof, and apparently about fifty feet high. The water disappeared under a low arch, and the obvious way was to the right up a steep, slippery slope of silt which lay in a great heap at a sharp incline to the very top on the right-hand side of the cavity. Once up, the lower portion was seen to be broken into a series of arches above the water, and a way was easily made by digging steps along the upper portion of the debris. On the roof we observed a great number of small stalactites. As the weather was somewhat threatening when we commenced our exploration, we decided to return to daylight and attempt to get farther into the passage next day.

Next morning the promise of finer weather was confirmed to a great extent; but clinging mists obscured the horizon and somewhat strengthened our feeling of caution. Goyden Pot was now accessible. In fact, on returning by the entrance the previous afternoon the sinking of the flood was distinctly marked. Within, the walls were damp to the roof from the spray and splash of the water. We ascertained the height of the window to the stream which issues at its foot to be about twenty feet, and on clambering over the rocks into the corner we found no evidences of a waterfall, but two large crevices in the rock. Our light man managed to make his way for a few feet into each of them, only to be driven back defeated by the narrowing of the cracks. Our hopes of being able to force a way into Manchester Hole were frustrated at least from this side. A council of war decided that in face of recent heavy rains it was

better to postpone our attack on the lower portion of Goyden Pot, and four of the most enthusiastic determined to make a second attack on Manchester Hole. The others departed sarcastically commenting on the foolishness of mouldy-warping.

Up in the Great Chamber the way was already familiar, and, the water being a few inches lower, our progress was very quick. As far as we could ascertain, this was the farthest point attained even in dry seasons by those who had attempted to explore Manchester Hole. Traversing the silt, we found the chamber to be about 100 feet long. Once over, the right wall bulged inwards, leaving a wet slide down to the water again. The Passage then turned sharp to the right, and for 100 feet proved easy going. There were a great number of stalactites, mostly thick for a foot or so and then terminating in slender points with a slight inclination in the direction of the current. Presently the roof descended to a little over a foot above the water. About twelve feet of this compelled us to crawl through the stream, and enabled one ardent cave-hunter to extinguish his candle, which took some persuading to re-light. The channel then narrowed, and again opened out into a small dome-shaped chamber about twenty five feet high, which we designated the Ramblers' Hall. The walls for some distance were dark, and incrustated with blackish deposit, from which protruded black shells, crumbling when touched, and great yellow masses of ivory-tinted calcareous deposit like the huge teeth of some extinct monster. The direction of the stream was now to the right along the narrowing passage to about 100 feet from the "creep" when it again bent to the left. The sides now closed in until the general width was less than three feet, and the water began to deepen and the current was appreciably slower.

Our leading man now found himself in a very narrow fissure on a steep bank of silt in deep water. By lying close to this and pressing against the opposite wall with his hands he was enabled to advance to a series of clefts down which the water seemed to sink. Further advance was checked, but we had every reason to think that we were within a short distance of the egress into Goyden Pot, for the noise of rushing water was audible, and from our measurements with a hundred feet of rope we must have come within a few feet of the distance between the mouth of Manchester Hole and Goyden Pot. Defeated, we waded back, with yet another plunge for one of us at the "creep" and then unroped and made our way to the light of day, presenting a very forlorn and dirty appearance, but all well pleased with the expedition. We noticed no fewer than five kinds of insects in the vicinity of the Great Chamber. After a dry season, and with proper care, the exploration is free from risk, and to those not afraid of a wetting well worth the trouble.

After a quick walk and a change of clothing, we departed by the lovely vale, now being transformed by human labour into a vast lake. It is sad to relate that many of the men working in the neighbourhood of Lofthouse are utterly devoid of lodgings. Beyond being paid their wages, all responsibility regarding them is shirked. Numbers of them sleep out habitually. Wooden shanties might at least be provided, and some efforts made to make these essentially useful men feel that willing workers are worthy of better treatment, even such as we accord unto our domestic animals. Naturally and excusably, they fly to drink.

With this depressing ending to our happy holiday we were soon "in among the throngs of men." determined at no distant date to make another attempt on Goyden Pot.



## **ON MOUNTAINS**

"The mountains of Norway - probably the oldest in Europe - invite us all. Let us go to them and learn amongst them the wholesome lessons which nature never withholds from those who really love her."

"You will form friendships on the mountains amongst the storm or sunshine, heat or cold, hard toil or well earned ease, keen pleasure, or danger and anxiety, which are stronger, more abiding, and more reliable than those formed in the city or on the plain"

Wm. Cecil Slingsby

## **CALL OF THE WILD** - Roy Denney

The great forest of Caledon originally covered much of the Highlands. Indeed the Roman's, named what we know of as Scotland 'Caledonia', meaning 'wooded heights'. It once covered over 1.5 million hectares but today just 1% of that remains. It's fragmented and the native pinewoods have been reduced to 35 isolated remnants and with over-grazing it's struggling to regenerate naturally. Now it's down to us to ensure the survival of this ancient and remarkable woodland. It's Scotland's equivalent of the rainforest and needs our help.

The forest was thought to have been a vast primeval wilderness of Scots pines, birch, rowan, aspen, juniper and other trees. On the west coast, oak and birch trees predominated in a temperate rainforest ecosystem rich in ferns, mosses and lichens. Many species of wildlife flourished in the forest, including the European beaver, wild boar, lynx, moose, brown bear and the wolf, as well as several notable species of birds; the capercaillie, the crested tit and the endemic Scottish crossbill, which occurs nowhere else in the world apart from the pinewoods.

'Trees for Life' is a charity set up to try and restore and extend the 'wild' forest, for its own sake; as a home for wildlife and to improve the ecological well being of the land itself. They support the efforts of those seeking to establish a new, ecologically-sustainable system of forestry, but do strongly believe that this must be complemented by the restoration of large areas of wild forest. In 2005, they planted their 500,000th tree, and have fostered the growth of many thousands more naturally regenerating seedlings. Working in partnerships with organisations such as the RSPB and Forestry Commission Scotland, they invite volunteers to help deliver a programme of practical work on the ground and every year sees people of all ages and backgrounds, from Scotland, the UK and beyond, taking the opportunity they have been looking for to help restore the natural environment.

The Highlands in particular have been described as a 'wet desert' as a result of the centuries of environmental degradation and exploitation which have reduced them to their present impoverished and barren condition.

Similar restoration schemes are starting in other parts of Britain. The Ancient Woodlands Project is

based in Rockingham Forest on the borders of Rutland, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire and it is intended it should restore the Forestry Commission's lands to native species. Conifers have been cleared in 24 woods to be replaced by native species such as field maple, ash, oak and hazel. This is not before time as ancient woodland is still under threat and not many local authorities maintain a proper register of such sites.

This is by way of a test case and if successful be emulated in other areas of the country.

Many parts of Rockingham Forest are being worked on and English Nature and a number of other conservation bodies have been involved working with Forest Enterprise. One particular strand of the project is to restore coppicing to most sites where it was previously employed and an analysis of all the Commission's woodland is being carried out to assess their suitability for this technique. This process was for many centuries the best way of producing a renewable supply of timber.

For the uninitiated it involves cutting the stems of broad-leaved shrubs and trees to encourage growth of new shoots which grow fast and straight and can then be cut to order when they have reached the desired length. This old practice is making a comeback on several counts.

This cutting back to ground level causes the stumps (stools) to create a thicket of new growth which would be left for ten years before being partially cropped and after a further ten years the whole process would be repeated. The long straight poles would be taken for fencing etc., the older trunks for building and the off cuts for burning either as firewood or to produce charcoal.



A much coppiced but long neglected lime tree thought to be nearly 1000 years old.

This example is located in Owston Woods in Leicestershire

Charcoal production is also on the increase for BBQs also helping finance new waves of coppicing to the benefit of much wildlife which thrives on coppiced woodland.

Such woodland in the various stages of its life cycle provides a welcome variety of habitat and stimulates bio-diversity. In the first years after cutting back the warm sheltered sunny glades created on the woodland floor is a boon to many plant forms and insects that thrive on them. As the dense thickets grow up again they provide safe nesting areas for many birds and dormice which also use the network for aerial walkways.

Similar schemes are in hand in Scotland and the 'Celtic Rainforest' round Argyll is being restored to former glories by the felling of conifers to allow the native species to thrive again.

We all know how it can rain and rain and rain round there and the term monsoon would not be out of place.

It does however support forests of native woodlands known as the Atlantic Oakwoods which had been being progressively choked out by commercial plantings but which are now being given their freedom to regenerate. We are in effect undoing the damage we have previously done.

As part of efforts being made to protect what is left of our natural habitat Scotland is in the process of deciding what may be the first of a number of Coastal and Marine National Parks and one of the favoured locations is the Argyll coast.

Others in contention are the Solway Firth, Wester Ross, the Outer Hebrides and Lochaber and quite how these schemes sit with plans for ever more wind turbines and electricity pylons escapes me.

There is however considerable resistance to the idea in a number of the proposed locations, in fact the natives are revolting and I can well understand why.

Residents of the Lochaber site being the coastline between the Sound of Mull and Skye agree that the deep sea lochs and remote peninsulas, white sandy beaches and chains of islands and the stands of native oak woods should be preserved along with the many ruined castles and long abandoned settlements going back to prehistoric times.

Wildlife abounds in the area including sea eagles, dolphins, minke whales, basking and other less welcome sharks up to and including the white.

Locals have a fear however that an all-powerful "conservationist empire" is taking over the Highlands and Islands, with Scottish National Heritage, National Trust for Scotland and similar bodies dictating to them on what they can do in their communities with their interests coming a long way behind the conservation interests.

I have to say that my experience working alongside many such bodies in England supports the view that 'experts' based in London or Edinburgh have little grasp of what really makes country and semi-wilderness areas tick.

Honourable exceptions I would suggest are the Woodland Trust and John Muir Trust.

Defra has a lot to answer for as did its late unlamented predecessor MAFF and it remains to be seen whether 'Natural England' is any better than the Countryside Agency and English Nature which it is replacing.

The Forestry Commission is starting to undo the harm it did and we can only hope that well intentioned 'experts' do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

Gone with the trees are all the large mammals, with the exception of the deer. Species such as the brown bear and the wild boar had become extinct by the 10th and 17th centuries respectively, while the last to disappear was the wolf, when the final individual was shot in 1743.

Despite this there are far more predators in Britain than many people realise and some are very effective killers. Pound for pound there is nothing in the animal kingdom more deadly than weasels, stoats, pine martens and polecats. They do not however cause us any problem and I for one am delighted when I catch sight of one. It just goes to show that size does not matter! Indeed if we really want to look at the most effective killers in our countryside we need to look at the insect world but that is another story.

Birds of prey including the owls are admired by most but their need to kill other animals to survive can upset some people. The Golden Eagle is an icon

for Scotland but two were poisoned last year. The RSPB posted a reward for the first time in its history in a bid to catch the criminals responsible. Two rare birds of prey were found to have been deliberately poisoned within the boundary of the Cairngorms National Park in two separate incidents in less than four weeks. A gamekeeper was recently fined £200 at Elgin Sheriff Court for shooting two buzzards near Dufftown. The RSPB have called the sentence "ludicrously low"

I love seeing seals and dolphins off our coasts but fishing interests hate them and there are calls for seal culls.

Wouldn't it be nice to see the return of some truly wild creatures to the more remote parts of Britain? Eagle owls are becoming more evident in remote rocky areas and they have re-colonised other European countries by taking advantage of quarry ledges of which we have plenty on offer.

These giant birds can take domestic pets or lambs but primarily their diet is rabbit and again these are in good supply. It does seem to be the fate of rabbits to provide a valuable link in the food chain for most predators which is presumably why they breed so enthusiastically.

The Red Kite reintroduction programme goes from strength to strength and shows what can be done. This bird is not strictly speaking a predator in that it mostly eats carrion. The Galloway Kite Trail was established in 2003 and has become one of the key wildlife tourism attractions in Dumfries and Galloway. Businesses along the Loch Ken route have seen expenditure increase on accommodation, food and travel. This bird is joining the osprey and eagle as a major income generator for Scotland.

The kites have shown the way and we can develop similar approaches with other species.

Wild boars now live in many parts of England but particularly, Dorset, West Kent, East Sussex, and Gloucestershire. Specimens have been seen in Yorkshire and Northumberland and occasionally in the Highlands of Scotland so they may yet make a comeback in the pinewoods. Escapees are now breeding successfully and it is thought there are about 1000 living wild.

As yet there are no reports of injury to visitors to the woodlands but several dogs have been badly

hurt by their slashing razor-sharp teeth. Campers in the Forest of Dean have seen their tents damaged by rampaging herds of these beasts. Their meat takes careful cooking somewhat similarly to wild venison but tastes very much of where they live. The nearest comparison is to the dark meat of turkey legs. With no natural predators it is thought that these creatures could suddenly expand their populations unless culled.

The EU is now considering paying farmers in parts of Portugal and Spain not to shoot rabbits as the shortage is putting the Iberian Lynx under threat. Conversely it is thought several escapees are thriving in the wilder parts of Britain and a major landowner in Wester Ross has actually offered to use his land for the first introductions of European lynx and has advocated including the wolves.

A recent report being publicised in Scotland has confirmed the deer population as a major problem up there and the idea of re-introducing wolves has received a serious airing.

One of the problems when we contemplate the introduction of such creatures is that purists will only support the idea if it can be proven that the creature was resident in fairly recent times. There has been a case made in purely ecological terms that we should re-introduce these creatures as the natural predators of rabbit, deer and boar (or alternatively further encourage the burgeoning population of 'gone wild' large cats) but I cannot see this being popular with a people the majority of whom never set foot in wild places and have little perception of the interlocking nature of the food chain in the wild.

A number of small conservation groups have gone on record as saying that in these circumstances reintroducing wolves would help if only in a small way and they would normally only take the old, young and infirm and it would help restore the wilds of Scotland to how they were centuries ago. With such abundant prey they would not be driven to attacking people, indeed there is little real evidence that they ever do except when absolutely desperate in Arctic blizzards. The last wolves in Britain were probably wiped out in the eighteenth century. Evidence does suggest that Eagle Owls were also about not many hundred years ago.

Lynx could be re-introduced to Britain as new evidence has been found suggesting the species

became extinct as the result of man's activity and was a native species until the sixth or seventh century. It is now known that they lived in North Yorkshire, and probably also in the Scottish Highlands and the Lake District as recently as that. Radio carbon dating of lynx bones has settled the argument. Bones found near Derwentwater and in caves in the Craven District of Yorkshire all confirm that timescale.

A release programme in the Alps to re-introduce wolves would on the face of it seem to be great success judging by the killing of almost 1000 sheep each year. A recent survey however suggests that there are only about 30 wolves at large and rather than accept that each must eat a similar number of sheep each year which would be more than a little incredible, I suspect that it has more to do with the introduction of compensation by the EU.

There are however objecting voices from within the walking community as one estate in Scotland would be surrounded by a 50 mile, 3m high electrified fence. For walkers there would be gates in the fence but access to this huge area of wild land in Sutherland would be greatly impeded. The Ramblers Association feel this is very much against the spirit of new access legislation in Scotland.

Personally whilst I see the need for fences at least initially to keep the creatures in, I do not see why walkers could not roam at will within the fenced area if the wildlife is restricted to wolves and lynx. If the owner starts contemplating bears, then it would be another matter.

The Wilderness Foundation has identified several areas of Britain where wilderness reserves could be established to support the reintroduction of once native animals. Suggested areas include Dartmoor, the Cairngorms, the North York Moors, Snowdonia and the Brecon Beacons.

The most likely candidates for re-introduction are wild horse, elk and reindeer, with wolves, lynx and beaver some way down the list. Last year however, the Scottish Executive turned down plans to reintroduce beavers due to the uncertainty of the environmental effects. You never know, we may yet hear the haunting call of the wolf as we wonder the hills but the chances of seeing a lynx, even if reintroduced, would be about as high as seeing a Scottish Wild Cat and how many of those have you seen.

Scientists in the USA are taking an even more dramatic stance. They have coined the term rewilding and are proposing turning back the clock in a big way. Whilst the areas of Britain where wild animals could thrive are limited there are great swathes of the USA where it could happen. They are proposing returning land to how it was over 10,000 years ago possibly creating massive wild life reserves with limited human visitation.

Many of the larger creatures which used to inhabit the areas are now extinct but they advocate bringing in similar creatures from other parts of the world to try and create a roughly equivalent food chain. This is a logical extension of the way zoos are becoming ever more natural environments to the creatures they hold.

They are talking of the possibility of African cheetahs to replace the extinct native one; Asian Elephants which are nearest relative to the mammoth and tortoises from Mexico just to give a few examples. Cousins of once native horses and camels are also suggested. They even dream of cloning extinct DNA remains into near relative modern animals to get close to the original species.

The deer population in the States is getting out of hand, native Americans no longer hunt for food and the predators were all wiped out apart from a few mountain lions. Wolves have been reintroduced in parts of the west but the more populated eastern states are suffering the problems of this ecological imbalance. Quite apart from the physical damage done by deer they and a local species of mouse carry ticks which are causing a surge in the numbers of cases of Lyme's disease. It is hard to see how sufficient predators can be introduced into wide enough areas to make any real difference but at least such massive reserves as are advocated would boost the tourist industry in otherwise backwaters of the US and would help us preserve the gene pool of creatures under threat in their normal homes throughout the world.

For more information visit [www.rewilding.org](http://www.rewilding.org).

Tooth & Claw is an independent project aimed at improving knowledge about Britain's predators and promoting discussion on some of the complex issues surrounding our relationship with wild predators and questions how we really feel and why? If you wish to participate in the debate look at their website, [www.toothandclaw.org.uk](http://www.toothandclaw.org.uk).

## **WANDERINGS IN THE JOTENHEIMEN - NORWAY 2006** Mick Borroff

Hilary and I visited Norway for the first time in 1999 and despite enduring four days of non-stop rain whilst on the Lofoten Islands, we both wanted to return. Re-reading Slingsby's classic 'Norway the Northern Playground' and the 2006 publication of two new guidebooks: 'Scandinavian Mountains and Peaks over 2000 metres in the Hurrungane' by James Baxter and 'Walks and Scrambles in Norway' by Anthony Dyer et al. provided us with even more inspiration. Both can be warmly recommended!

With just under two weeks to play with, we decided to head for the Hurrungane first and then further east into the Jotenheimen. Since we took the more direct route to Flam and Aurlandsfjord last time, this time we set off north from the ferry terminal in Bergen, along the north shore of Sognefjord via Balestrand and Solvorn, taking in the delightful stave church of Urnes and its stunning 11<sup>th</sup> C carvings of mythical beasts.



We decided to take a look at one of the side arms of the Jostedalsglacier and headed up past the information centre for an evening stroll up towards the blue ice Niggardsbreen glacier to view the terminal ice fall and its glacial lake. A notice in the information centre offered canoeing trips on a higher glacial lake, so the next day we headed up to the Styggevatnet lake, considerably enlarged and dammed to provide hydro-electric power.

No canoeing was on offer (it was very late in the season) so a circular walk was undertaken from Styggevatnet over the Handspiken col and down the grey granite boulder fields following way marks to Syrtbyttvatnet, returning along Sprongsdalen and stopping briefly at the DNT Sprongsdalhytte self-service cabin.

The next morning was spent driving up Highway 55 to the Hurrungane mountains on the western side of the Jotenheimen. Arriving at the Turtagrø Hotel (newly rebuilt after a fire), more maps were purchased and we parked the motorhome in a

suitable spot affording a wide-angle view above Ringsdalen to Fannaråken (2068m). Wolfing down lunch, I headed off to climb Dyrhaugstind (2147m), an interesting scramble along a frost shattered ridge to reach the massive summit cairn, which needed to be climbed to sit on the top! The view from the top over the Ringstindane mountains to the south and eastwards over the Jotenheimen peaks was fantastic.

Waking at our wild camp, it was clear that the weather had closed in with rain coming in from the west, so we headed further east along Highway 55 across Sognefjell towards Lom. Part way the rain eased off so we stopped near the Bøvertun mountain hut to inspect the caves in Dummdalen. Multiple entrances provide ready access into the caves that have captured the Dumma river and we came across a party of teenagers in the process of exploring them. (For cave details see [www.krossbuguiden.com/dummdalen\\_e.html](http://www.krossbuguiden.com/dummdalen_e.html).) Leaving the caves behind, I continued upstream to Svarttjønne lake which was the source of the river, then across the deserted fell, before joining the ancient waymarked route crossing the fell to meet Hilary at the Sognefjellhytte, back on Highway 55.

We left our wildcamp near then and took a turn around Lom. Delicious smells from the wood-fired bakery soon caught our attention and armed with some excellent coffee and Norwegian pastries, we sat in their lounge overlooking the thunderous river below. Suitably fortified, we headed into the Jotenheimen along the unsurfaced single track that leads to the old farm complex that is now the Spiterstulen mountain hut, thankful not to meet any other traffic coming the other way. An evening stroll south down Visdalen afforded enticing views up to the glaciers descending from Galdhøppigen, Norway's highest peak, my next objective.

The early morning mist was soon burnt off, revealing sunshine and blue skies perfect for the stony ascent of Galdhøppigen 2469m via the Keilhaus top.

The summit was soon underfoot and I lingered to enjoy the tremendous views, with the one hundred and one 2000m peaks in the Jotenheimen all on view dominating a similar number of glacial snowfields glinting in the sun.

A traverse was completed via the bare ice Piggbreen and Styggebreen glaciers, passing the separate skeletal remains of a lemming and a reindeer, down towards to the Juvvasshytte and a long diagonal descent back to Spiterstulen.



Next day the weather degenerated for the steep climb up the boulderfields to the summit of Glittertind 2464m on the opposite side of the valley and sleet, drizzle and snow flurries proved to be the order of the day. With no view to detain me on the summit snowfield, the ascent route was quickly reversed back to Spiterstulen.



Galdhøpiggen and view off

The weather had not improved so we returned to Lom for another pastry and some more fresh bread before deciding to head west over the partially unmetalled Gamle Strynefjellsveg via Stryn to Loen, with the aim of ascending Skåla (1843m) in the Breheimen. At 1800m of ascent from virtually sea level, it is one of the longest ascents in Norway. However the next day saw the cloud down to 100m and the attempt was abandoned. In copious rain, we headed back east away from the coast back to Lom to begin our journey back to Bergen, via the southern Jotenheimen.

last visit, heading for the shore of Bygdin lake - one of Norway's largest.

Hilary dropped me off to the north on the Valdresflye fell to allow me to traverse the three tops of the Fagerdalshøe ridge leading to the panoramic Synshorn (1475m).



Fagerdalshøe Ridge and the Bitihorn

Parking up off Highway 51 just to the north of Gjende lake, we had escaped the wet weather and took the opportunity to explore some tracks on our mountain bikes near Sjødalvatnet lake, through the forest to the open fell and on to the remote mountain farms in Griningsdalen.



Here we met up to enjoy the amazing views of the azure lake Bygdin laid out before us, leading the eye some 20-odd km towards the sharply-pointed 2000m peaks in the heart of the Jotenheimen.

Reluctantly we descended down to the shore, and began our journey over the Hardangervidda back to Bergen. We stopped the next day to visit the reknowned Voringfossen, a 342m waterfall, with a 182m drop.



The next morning was brilliantly sunny and saw us driving past Gjende lake and the splendid Bessyeggen ridge traverse, which we did on our



Having viewed it from the top next to the Fossli hotel, I took a path that descended into the depths of the Måbødalen canyon to view it and its captured rainbow from river level - an awesome prospect!

So in conclusion Norway provided another excellent trip with magnificent mountains, absence of crowds and stunning scenery. It will make an excellent venue for a future alpine meet.



Helgedalsnosi and Steindalsnosi

## **LOENGPO GANG 7083M - GREAT WHITE PEAK**



It is often said that the nineteen fifties was the golden age of Himalayan mountaineering and indeed they were, with the highest peaks in the world being climbed one after the other by mountaineers from many nations, Britons foremost among them.

It does however evoke sad memories within the club and it is perhaps time to reflect and remember, 50 years on.

The Club were eager to share in the endeavours and the glory, but by 1955 it was obvious that our candidates for inclusion in the big national expeditions such as Everest and Kanchenjunga were being passed over in favour of men who had already shown that they could go well, at over 20,000 feet.

Harry Stenbridge pointed out at the Annual Dinner that year that the only way YRC men could get the necessary high level experience was for us to organise our own Himalayan expedition.

Charles Evans, fresh from Kanchenjunga, was the principal guest at that dinner and he asked Crosby Fox if he wanted to go to the Himalayas. "Of course," said Crosby, "Then why don't you go— was the rejoinder"

It needed no more than this spark to fire up Crosby's enthusiasm, and he started suggesting that we should immediately start planning an expedition for the spring of 1957 to attempt some technically difficult peak at about 23,000 feet. The Committee responded with equal enthusiasm, and invited him to lead the expedition and although we did not realize it at the time this was to be the first Himalayan expedition sponsored by a single club.

Three problems faced the club; who would make up the team, what should be the objective and how would it be financed. We had plenty of capable men in the Club, but had we sufficient who could get away for four or five months and afford the then not inconsiderable sum of £200 towards the cost, and the loss of earnings entailed. It didn't take long to find out that we had, indeed the difficulty was not in finding a party, but in selecting one from the first rate men available. The final team selected were:- Crosby, George Spenceley, deputy leader, Wilfred Anderson, expedition secretary, Dan Jones, medical officer, Arthur Tallon and R. B. Wharldall. Sadly a few weeks before the expedition was due to leave, Wharldall, having done

a great deal of work towards the expedition, was unable to join the party. Fortunately Maurice Wilson was able to make up the team.

The objective was discussed with Charles Evans, who after a good deal of thought, put forward three suggestions from which the Jugal Himal was finally decided upon, mainly because it was the last area in Nepal where most of the peaks were unclimbed and about which very little was then known.

The report of the Ladies' Scottish Himalayan Expedition, the only party to have visited the area, told of unlimited virgin peaks up to 23,000 feet. These peaks were indeed formidable and from photographs it appeared that only one of them possessed a reasonable route, all else seeming utterly unclimbable. As an added challenge however this was the highest mountain of the group, a peak of 23,240 feet situated on the Tibetan Nepalese frontier.

Although its height had been established and its position fixed by the Indian Survey this mountain had no name. But the Sherpas of the Ladies' Scottish Himalayan Expedition had christened it the Great White Peak and as such it was always referred to although it is now properly named Loengpo Gang 7083m.

If the Club thought that newspapers would fall over themselves offering large sums of money for the exclusive news rights of the expedition we were quickly disillusioned. Expeditions were no longer front page news.

Apart from £100 from one National Paper, and offers to pay for articles when seen and approved, we had to rely on our own resources for the substantial sums required. A grant was made from Club funds, members of the Club gave magnificently as individuals, and the Mount Everest Foundation not only gave us a very generous grant but backed up our application to enter Nepal. An appeal to North Country firms and friends of the Club brought in £441, and food and equipment was either given or supplied at "part cost". Especially welcome was the unstinted help which was offered to us by members of many other Himalayan expeditions and the staff at the British Embassy in Katmandu. Despite plenty of help being available it was not all plain sailing and at times things seemed to come to a halt and everyone felt

frustrated. The Club bought too much of this, or were short of that, the tents were wrong and had to be sent back, and there were arguments about the methods of packing.

The closure of the Suez Canal in September, 1956, made air travel necessary considerably adding to the cost, while entry into Nepal was complicated by new government regulations which included a substantial entrance fee for climbing parties, an added financial burden that we could ill afford.

To keep expenses down all the packing cases were made by members of the expedition as well as packed and catalogued by them, but in spite of this, finance was a constant headache as it was clear that we had underestimated the cost.

Permission to enter Nepal came through at last, and in January, 1957, tons of gear was shipped by way of the Cape. Early on the morning of 17th March, the team left London Airport fit and eager for the fray.



As you can imagine travel in those days was far more complicated than it is today. A 36 hour flight got them as far as Calcutta to meet up with the ship carrying the kit from the UK. A train ride to about a mile short of the Ganges and porters carrying the three and a half tons of kit over the sand to a steamer to get to the Nepali border 48 hours later. Then by miniature railway for four and a half hours before taking to a lorry for two days over 'roads' reaching 8000 feet arriving in Katmandu 16 days after they had set off.

In many ways the expedition was a great success but all achievements are overlooked in the light of the ensuing tragedy. On April 30<sup>th</sup> 1957 Crosby Fox and two Sherpas were killed at 19,000 feet by an avalanche which buried them in a crevasse. A week

later Dan Jones and a Sherpa fell on the traverse between base camp and camp I and suffered severe injuries.

Things had been going well; after arriving at base camp by a trek of 10 days, they spent two weeks setting up four camps the highest at 19,000 feet and ferrying supplies up the line.

On the fateful day they had surveyed a route above Camp IV through a tricky icefall full of crevasses and found a way out onto the area above it. Crosby had surrendered his normal lead position on the rope to George as he was suffering some altitude headache. They did appreciate the potential danger of an avalanche; it was clear that the only feasible route up the ice fall was on the true left side where for a short period they would be threatened by a line of ice cliffs above. There was no alternative route and they accepted it as a calculated risk. As they started their descent in cloudy conditions they did hear nearby soft avalanche noises but nothing particularly severe. They retraced their steps between the crevasses again going close to the ice wall as they had coming up and then turning to head round one crevasse and back towards the centre of the ice corridor with large crevasses on both sides.

Then suddenly and just as the last man on the rope had made the turn they heard a mighty roar form high above. There was no mistaking what it was or where it was going. It was a great ice avalanche and it was coming their way. After a few desperate moments trying to run they crouched down and braced themselves. At the last moment George looked round; on the upward slope was the gaping crevasse which gave a feeble hope, behind which a great cloud of snow was advancing and outlined against it, bent and braced as he was were three figures, Crosby Fox, Mingma Tenzing and Lakpa Noorbu. That was the last he ever saw of them.

George describes how he was in motion pushed by an irresistible force, then almost immediately found himself falling into a crevasse, but his fall was not very far. A great force of snow followed him which he desperately tried to ward off with his arms. How long he lay there he cannot say, but all was strangely still and quiet. He was 25 feet down at the extreme end of the crevasse and where he lay it was narrow, his body almost spanning the walls. Although still alive and uninjured his position would have given him little

comfort, but he could now see that in the centre of the crevasse where it was widest, the avalanche debris had formed a cone, mounting up to within a few feet of the lip of the crevasse. At least he knew he should be able to get out.

He was still suffering from shock and it was some time before the full horror of the situation entered his dazed mind. He could not yet believe that Fox and the Sherpas were not just outside, unharmed as he was; the awful alternative he refused to grasp.

When he struggled free from the snow he tried to shout to them, but could make no sound as he was gasping for breath as never before, and for some minutes he had to lean against the wall before making a second attempt. The sound of his voice was lost however, absorbed by the snow and ice around him.

When he had strength to move he made a few steps up the slope towards the centre of the crevasse to be halted by the rope that tied him to his companions, 20 feet part. It was not broken. He followed it back to the little pit from which he had emerged. It descended vertically into the floor and he could only pull a few feet free; no portent could be more ominous. He had now no axe and could dig only with his hands. At first the snow was soft and he cleared a little of the rope, but soon he came to hard compacted snow and ice on which he could make no impression. He knew then there was no hope, below that solid floor no man could live.

George untied from the rope and climbed out and for some time walked around trying to orientate himself. He peered into another crevasse, likewise filled with debris, one of the dark pits round which they had walked that morning, but he could see that no victims could be there. The crevasse into which he had fallen was immediately below the position the whole party must have occupied at the time the avalanche struck but with a fragment of hope he looked around and called out once more. He talks of an awful deathlike silence into which his voice feebly penetrated. Nothing relieved the whiteness around him and he felt very much alone.

Nothing remained but to make his way down and soon, a little below, he picked out their morning's tracks which he hastily followed, now crawling over the more dangerous of the snow bridges. He stopped at the pathetically empty tents of Camp

IV and there found a message from Anderson and Wilson. They were having trouble with the Primus stove at the lower camp and had decided to return that day to Camp I. This was a blow indeed.

He packed a rucksack with a sleeping bag and a duvet jacket; he felt strong enough by then but thought some sort of reaction might follow before he could go so far. He set out and fortunately there was no difficulty and little danger but he was in a sorry state of mind as he went down the last slopes leading to Camp III, where to his great joy, standing beside the tents was a figure in red windproofs; Anderson. The camp after all was occupied. Soon kindly hands were looking after him while he told his tragic tale.

George had seen the crevasse and knew there was no hope but for the others some slender hope still existed. Wilson with Pamba Tenzing immediately set off for Camp I to carry the news; a fine effort for they had already suffered a most exhausting day. Prompt action was immediate upon their arrival at Camp I. Jones and Ang Temba set off in falling light for Base Camp to collect the spades and after snatching a brief spell of sleep they departed at 3 a.m. returning to Camp I from where Tallon and Pemba Gyalgen took over and at first light raced up the glacier to be followed shortly by the other two. George and Andy had made their way back up to camp IV where the others caught them up. Not wishing to risk the Sherpas if another avalanche struck the YRC team went on alone, but the sight of the end of the rope put paid to the slim hopes that to other than George, had still existed. After some time fruitlessly digging even that had to be abandoned and the three were left to their common grave.

Was the Club right in encouraging them to go? Crosby was an experienced climber, his record of Alpine ascents over the years was impressive as was the record of the other members of the team.

Stembridge was in no doubt. Mountaineering, perhaps more than in any other field of human endeavour, has a very fine line dividing triumph from disaster. How near to success they were we know from Crosby Fox's last report, yet when the avalanche killed their friends and shattered their hopes, the survivors rose to the emergency and in spite of subsequent misfortune did what had to be done with courage and determination.

Long gone but not forgotten.

Précis by Roy Denney, of the articles on the expedition found in journal, series 8 issue 29. The idea originated with Andy Anderson in memory of Crosby Fox and has been developed following discussions with Andy and with George.

George has expressed much gratitude to Andy for his concern and assistance after the accident and before his departure for Katmandu, particularly in writing reports for the press and telegrams. In the final departure of the expedition from Base Camp, George and Andy with two Sherpas crossed a pass on to the Dorje Lakpa Glacier and returned independently by a different route. It was on this final march that again George appreciated the good companionship of Andy.

p.s. Dan Jones, died 21 January this year, whilst in hospital following a fall at home in which he broke his hip. He seemed in reasonably good



George and Andy on the way out, spirits, George and Andy on the way out.



En route for Camp IV



Crosby and Sherpas  
near Camp III



Phurbi Chyachumba  
Glacier



Final icefall and  
Big White Peak



Dan Jones

**LADAKH, A LAND OF WATER?**



**HIGH SIERRA 2006**

Bishop Crag  
Mathes Crest



Darwin Bench  
Eichorn Peak





# NATURAL HISTORY SNIPPETS



## WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### HISSING MISSING

One creature getting ever rarer is the harmless grass snake; I last saw one about three years ago, sunning itself by a canal bank although I used to see them fairly often. Adders also seem thinner on the ground although I have seen a few this year in the woodlands where I orienteer and prepare orienteering maps. I well remember my first sighting which did come as a bit of a shock. I was walking across a headland in North Devon covered with bracken and gorse and there was little doubt as to what it was with its zigzag pattern along its back.

Adders often bask and are usually easier to find than grass snakes which do so much less frequently and are more normally found in dark damp places near water and are good swimmers. Most people are familiar with the renowned pattern of the adder but the grass snake is olive coloured with rows of black spots and a yellow collar. Adders occur throughout Britain in many habitats including sand dunes, moorland, heaths and most areas of rough ground with cover and sites for the creature to bask.

The adder is Britain's only poisonous snake and obviously needs to be treated with some caution but there are many myths engrained in our culture. Adders are very shy and will normally be long gone by the time you arrive where they had been just minutes before. They will always do their best to avoid people and large animals but if threatened, the adder may bite. Adders see and hear very well but they can also sense vibration with their bodies and smell the air with their tongues.

They grow to just over two feet in length and females are larger than the males (these have been recorded at nearly 3 foot). They are long lived creatures although we are not sure how long. Being cold blooded they need little food and can go as long as 18 months without any. This snake is a member of the viper family and is also known as the common viper. Unlike most reptiles, which lay eggs buried in the ground, the female adder carries the eggs inside her until they are about to hatch. During the laying process the soft eggs break

revealing the live young, usually between 8 and 12 in number.

Adder bites can be fatal but deaths in normally healthy humans are extremely rare and to the best of my knowledge have not happened in Britain for many years. If you are bitten it is not recommended that you try to suck out the poison or apply a tourniquet contrary to popular myth. You should seek medical help but anti-toxins are rarely necessary. April is a good month to see adders or is a month to take care as they will have emerged from hibernation and spend a much of their time basking in the sun. Once we get into summer the midday heat becomes too much for them and whilst they are about as the sun comes up, they disappear underground or into stone walling for long periods to avoid the intensity of the mid day sun.

Another snake we find in Britain is the smooth snake although I have never seen one. This one is not venomous but is a constrictor in that it grabs and squeezes its prey. This creature is a bit picky and lives almost exclusively on the sandy heaths of southern England.

It mainly eats other reptiles but will take young mammals. It is about the same size as an adder and can live over 35 years.

Snakes predators include some birds of prey and occasionally hedgehogs and their prey ranges from insects to common lizards and field voles.

### WILD LIFE WONDERLAND

Research has shown that the Himalayan watersheds have eco systems even more diverse than the Amazon.

Unfortunately deforestation of the lower slopes is causing great concern and amongst the creatures most at risk due to loss of habitat are Bengal tigers, leopards, musk deer, Indian rhinos and elephants, black bears, golden eagles and bearded vultures.

## IT'S THE ENVIRONMENT STUPID!

To plagiarise and adapt a famous political truism the forthcoming elections in many democracies will be greatly effected by environmental issues and the ways countries are trying to put things right.

Temperatures will probably rise by more and faster than presently predicted according to recent studies of potential climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports that global average temperatures could rise by between 1 and 6.3 degrees C by the end of this century and this is the outcome of work by many thousands of scientists around the world since this body was set up in 1988 by the United Nations to examine evidence of our impact on global warming. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the only real pollution on the planet is too many people making too much demand on finite resources.

We are positively causing many of the problems and are adding to them by neglect and omission. It is now widely accepted that a global average temperature rise of more than two degrees will be extremely dangerous to both human society and the world's eco system. A rise of more than five degrees would be catastrophic to many cities in coastal area which includes many of the major capitals of the world. Surprisingly the scientists conclude that sea level rise may be lower than previously feared (only 2 foot by the end of this century) but this will still cause major flooding. This is still however a moving prediction and several informed sources still fear it will be worse than this.

The problem is now widely accepted as being man made and will only be made worse unless the developing economies such as India, China and Brazil agree to cut emissions and it is beholding on the rest of the world to assist them as they are only playing catch up and the west has already done much of the damage. The US executive, despite growing pressure from the Democrat-dominated Congress, is unlikely to sign up to any binding limits but is trying to use technology to abate the effects of its own output.

It is now predicted that snow will disappear from all but the highest mountains, tundra will thaw, glaciers will recede and oceans will become more acidic, eventually leading to the destruction of coral reefs.

Ocean temperatures have already risen as far down as 3k below the surface.

What to do about the problems is still hotly debated but trees must feature greatly in any discussions as they are a major way of carbon capture. The use of only sustainable timber must be a goal with major rainforests of the world still being decimated. We are trying to do our bit in this country by planting the new National Forest. Other green initiatives such as industrial size wind turbines have their own well publicised shortcomings. It seems that offshore wind farms are the only option at all viable and they can only really come into their own if overall energy costs rise by about 30%.

Britain is not a well treed country and whilst we are doing something about improving the coverage a lot of our existing wild and semi wild wood is badly neglected. Climate change is having a marked effect on our wildlife but we could assist more by managing and preserving (and linking) our limited woodland areas. We have disturbed the natural balance of things and cannot now just leave nature to look after itself. Many creatures are under threat and some are on the verge of dying out due to the neglect of ancient forests. Bats, dormice and a number of woodland bird species are struggling despite efforts to assist them with release programmes and entire species of plants and animals are vanishing.

50% of our forests are now in effect derelict, according to the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology. As part of a ministerial review underway of English forestry strategy, they state that some forests, many more than 400 years old, had been poorly managed and broken up into isolated fragments so small that they could no longer support rich wildlife. Birds such as lesser spotted woodpeckers, marsh tits and woodcocks are declining at alarming rates. It seems that insects such as the fritillary butterfly have almost vanished from wooded areas and plants such as violets, primrose and brambles, are also under threat. As orienteers we are well aware of the poor state of many woodlands and whilst we might not miss the brambles they are a major food source.

I am a member of the John Muir trust working to try and preserve remnants of truly wild places and also of the Woodland Trust doing similar works often in areas much closer to inhabited areas. The National Trust and RSPB are also doing their bit



creating and preserving habitat. Such groups need all the help we can give but we must also try and put a stop to the bad practices and neglect which is the cause of a good part of the problem.

We can at a global level try and stop climate change and we can all play our small part in this but closer to home and more immediately we can try and help the wildlife which is being attacked on all fronts. Truly 'Ancient' wood now covers less than 2% of the country and although much woodland is protected by law, its ability to support wildlife has declined dramatically. Poor replanting schemes over the last 100 years have produced woods that are lacking in the variety essential in any woodland environment as most trees in these newer woodlands are all of one age. Replanting projects have left forests with few of the mature and dead trees needed to provide homes for animals such as the brown long-eared bat, which lives in natural tree hollows. The reduction in coppicing, which involves cutting down trees on a rotational basis to create clearings, has also meant that woodland canopies block out vital sunlight needed for smaller plants, flowers and insects to survive. Forest clearings, dead wood and mature trees are needed to sustain many species; flowers such as primroses, bluebells and yellow archangel all rely upon clearings to grow. The dormouse is on the Red List of species under threat due to the disappearance of the cover provided by low level shrubs such as bramble. A survey of woodland plant life by the Forestry Commission revealed that 56 out of 72 key plant species have become "significantly less common" over the past 30 years. According to the RSPB willow tits have reduced in numbers by 63% over the same period while lesser spotted woodpecker numbers have dropped by 78%, due to loss of soft, dead wood.

The Forestry Commission and the new Natural England, are attempting to encourage rare species back to the woodland by careful felling of trees to create open environments. Many woodlands are slowly being cleared of any trees with commercial value with the areas being then allowed to naturally regenerate. It cannot just be left to nature however and selective felling and the leaving of some mature trees are needed to create diversity.

Unfortunately however, as we begin to realise what skills are needed both to properly manage woodland and to support wildlife requirements, we also realise that many of these skill have largely been lost.

All is not gloom however. With the advent of the new National Forest being developed across the Midlands (to date 17 million new trees have been planted) support is being provided for schemes to spread such knowledge. In my work with the National Forest I have met and assisted a number of landowners creating new woodlands and along the way introduced our member Keith Raby to one of them. As some of you will know Keith has a lifetime interest in outdoor pursuits and wildlife and he decided a couple of years ago to get out of the rat race and pursue his hobbies as an alternate source of employment. Together with the landowner in question he set up a centre offering practical rural skills training and certification. At 'Daniel Hayes' they offer one day, weekend and monthly courses including rural apprenticeships, the aim being to encourage people into a career in general and woodland management. If like me you are beyond the age where a new career beckons then you can just attend for a fascinating working holiday. I have spent many happy days learning hedge laying, bridge building, restoring a Victorian kitchen garden, creating, damming and restoring ponds, planting trees, coppicing them and indeed felling mature ones. I have helped operate a mobile saw mill, have built cleft fencing from scratch and created charcoal and done some dry stone walling.

Daniel Hayes is itself a fascinating place. Purchased only 6 years ago the owner is slowly restoring the historic landscape and buildings. The name derives from the Saxon settlement here and the 300 acres was known to be a deer park in 1245. Stone age finds suggest Mesolithic and Neolithic use as a hunting station and the finds were featured on ITV's History Detective series. Evidence has also been found of Roman occupation and parts of the present house date back to Elizabeth 1

The downside of so much weekend activity is that Keith finds it increasingly difficult to get out on meets. Who knows one of these days we may have a club meet involving a long walk through the National Forest with a Sunday visit to Daniel Hayes.

[www.danielhayes.co.uk](http://www.danielhayes.co.uk)      [www.jmt.org](http://www.jmt.org)  
[www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside](http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside)  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)  
[www.forestry.gov.uk](http://www.forestry.gov.uk)      [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)  
[www.nationalforest.org](http://www.nationalforest.org)  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)  
[www.wildlifetrusts.org](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org)  
[www.woodland-trust.org.uk](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk)

## HOLY BIRDS?

There is something majestic when this winged messenger from the gods swoops down from the heavens, and many of us have been lucky enough to pause in awe watching as one plummets towards the earth at speeds of up to 200 miles per hour making it the fastest creature on earth.

Although most people think of Peregrine Falcons as rare and indeed they were nearly wiped out by DDT, there are actually about 1,500 pairs in Britain. This compares with a low point of some 300 pairs in 1972.

This population is of world wide importance given they are effectively extinct across most of the United States, and that it comprises about 30% of the entire European population.

It is a wonderful sight to watch these birds at work. They often hunt by sitting on high vantage points, using their exceptional eyesight to spot anything as much as a mile away. Alternatively they circle thousands of feet up before undertaking their breathtaking stoops. At the right moment they turn earthwards, building up speed, before folding into a teardrop shape to minimise wind resistance.

Their prospects in Britain look pretty good, the only limit on numbers apparently being a lack of nesting sites. They usually rear their young in scrapes on cliffs and almost all natural sites have been taken up. The birds are now turning to quarries and tall buildings. Pairs now nest on power stations, schools, churches and blocks of flats and are found in and around many cities. As messengers from the heavens it is perhaps quite appropriate that in recent years they have nested on Derby, Exeter, Salisbury, Chichester and Canterbury cathedrals.

They are exclusively bird-eaters with their quarry dictated by what is available. They are fond of smaller seabirds such as puffins and kittiwakes, and I was fortunate last year, to get a close up of a pair nesting on cliffs in the Isles of Scilly.

However most birds living near to cities and using tall buildings as homes take pigeons as their staple diet; no bad thing given the problems those birds cause, both the feral ones in the towns and the wood pigeons in the countryside.

## CHOUGHED AGAIN

2006 saw a second pair of wild choughs breed in Cornwall. In the six years since the national bird of Cornwall first bred in modern times 23 birds have been successfully raised.

The new nesting pair is a male born to the first pair in 2004 and a female that came to the area the same year.

## POLECATS ON THE PROWL

Another hard to see creature, the Polecat is on the comeback trail. It was until recently, thought to be only surviving in Scotland and part of mid Wales but a number of road kills and sightings have shown that it has re colonised woodlands in much of central and southern England and there were four sightings in Sussex in 2006. It is now thought to have quadrupled in numbers over the last ten years.

With suitable habitat these creatures quickly fill any environmental niche as they are prolific breeders. These wild 'ferrets' with their masked faces have large litters of kits, often of a dozen or more and they are voracious killers which should help keep the population of rabbits down and perhaps more importantly the rapidly expanding population of rats.

## MEADOW? FLOWERS

A detailed survey has discovered 596 species of wildflowers amongst the roadside verges in Cumbria.

This is up by 100 from the last such survey and reflects the more considerate cutting schedules being adopted by local authorities.

The future of these ancient hay-meadow species may not be so bleak after all.

## CARBON FOOTPRINTS

A recent article in the Yorkshire Post was interesting for two reasons. First that a whole school student population worked out what their personal "footprint" is. This includes travel to and from school and an estimate of out of school time travel so that a Carbon Dioxide figure could be

calculated and thus a Carbon Debt figure; which in turn leads to the number of trees needed to redress the imbalance. As a result the pupils planted just under 10 trees per pupil - almost 7,000 new trees!

For those YRC Journal readers who like the mathematics, here is the calculation. Based on a 25mpg fuel consumption, a motor car uses 40 gallons of fuel and that produces 800lb of Carbon Dioxide. A thousand air miles would create 400lb of Carbon Dioxide. An average tree absorbs 800 lb of Carbon Dioxide during its life.

Apologies for the Imperial units: but no doubt the "modern" reader can easily transfer to the CGS metric system. The answer is the same in trees.

Rob Ibberson (With acknowledgment to the "Yorkshire Post" and the school a number of our members will have attended)

## TREE HUGGERS UNITE

Groups of ancient trees are unique in the quantity and variety of life they sustain, above and below ground. They have been part of our unfolding history for centuries. They are a link to the original Wildwood. Ancient trees are living relics of incredible age that can inspire in us feelings of awe and mystery. What sights have they seen? They have helped shape our history, and will help shape our future if we let them.

A new campaign is being launched to try to reveal their secrets, discover the wildlife they sustain and unlock their stories gathered over centuries.

The Ancient Tree Hunt involves thousands of people in finding and mapping all the fat, old trees across the UK. It will create a comprehensive database of ancient trees and those approaching that status, as the first step towards protecting them.

The ATH has already collected more than 6,000 records and now seeks help from us and many partner organisations, to record at least 100,000 ancient trees throughout the UK by 2011. It is hoped that this may be nearer a half million

This will give a much better understanding of the number and size of ancient trees across the UK. You can also find details of ancient trees near where you live or places that you visit frequently.

Ancient trees are found anywhere and everywhere - so everyone can help.

Mapping this extraordinary asset is a crucial step towards a more enlightened approach to our remarkable treescape. We are the guardians of a landscape of European importance, but we don't yet know how many and where they are.

There are thousands of ancient trees scattered across our towns and countryside, yet to be discovered and recorded. It is a huge task to find them all, but it is hoped to eventually record the location of every ancient tree in the UK.

If you visit [www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk) you can find out which trees have already been mapped or register any finds you have made. The more information you can add the better but the minimum requirement is very basic. You can take part in the project by finding, measuring and recording these ancient trees - you can either spot them while you are out and about, or perhaps you already know about one in your local community, or even have one in your garden.

You do not have to worry about getting anything wrong as they are training at least one for each county to check and verify records submitted by others.

One of the principle requirements is to give a reasonable assessment of the girth. If you have no other means available whilst you are out and about it can be measured by hugs. See how far round the tree your arms will reach or join hands with your companions and see how many of you it takes to circle it.

Go on! Give that tree a hug.

## WHERE THE BLUEBELL ARE THEY

They have been voted our most popular wild flowers but this beautiful bloom may be at risk as its native woodland habitat falls victim to changing climatic conditions, the demands of agriculture and hybridisation.

There is now a nationwide plea for people to find, identify and record bluebells in their local area. The records will help build a picture of bluebells by mapping their distribution and revealing when and where bluebells first flower across the country.

When out walking next spring, look out for colonies of bluebells growing in your local area and then log your findings on the Natural History Museum web site.

## **POWER, BUT NOT TO THE PEOPLE**

As we go to press of 11,546 representations to the Scottish executive on the subject only 59 were in favour of building 181 giant turbines on Lewis. A final decision is still awaited but it seems likely it will go ahead. This wind power debate spins on which is more than we can say for many of the turbines which are rapidly being discredited. They are inefficient producers of power costing massive sums to create in addition to the pricing subsidy they need to compete, and they only have estimated life spans of between 20 and 30 years.

During the construction of turbines, hundreds of large lorries drive along roads often in remote areas where with little or no visibility in either direction which greatly increases the risk of a major road traffic accident. The visual distraction (once the turbines are erected) to motorists will be immense, again possibly causing accidents. During the construction the damage to the environment is excessive, with large excavations taking place often in areas teeming with wild life. This is not to mention the limestone uplands being quarried to create the cement. The emissions from lorries taking incalculable tons of concrete to the sites would exceed many years of the savings in emissions from a traditional power plant using fossil fuel. We need not go into the energy required for the processing of it. The unpleasant flickering caused by the sunlight through the blades can be like a giant strobe light, causing nuisance to anybody within a two-mile vicinity, including motorists. Television and communication interference is a fact that is beyond dispute in areas surrounding such installations.

The things that tourists look for, the peace, quiet and unspoilt, beautiful countryside are destroyed. There will not be and compensating money or jobs for any local economy; the turbines will be manufactured elsewhere and specialists brought in to erect them. Once they are built, what jobs are created - NONE?

The noise often contravenes noise nuisance laws as is evident from installations in the UK. Large turbines have been known to shed blades and 'throw' ice daggers so they must not be too near to human habitation. The public health risk is high, with reports of people directly exposed to the acoustic and optical effects of wind farms suffering from symptoms such as pulse irregularities and states of anxiety, which are

known from the effects of infrasound (sound of frequencies below the normal audible limit).

Numerous official reports from the USA, Belgium, Holland and Spain point to high bird mortality in those countries, at varied wind farm locations.

I am like many others with good 'green' credentials, strongly in favour of renewable energy but not wind turbines. To quote a representative of the Countryside Agency, the Government's own countryside watchdog "I do not feel it makes sense to tackle one environmental problem by creating another".

It follows that there are numerous requirements before any project would meet with general approval all of which are difficult to achieve. The provision of access for construction traffic without danger to highway safety and permanent and significant damage to the environment; avoidance of feeding grounds and routes for migrating birds; there being no unacceptable harmful effect on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers by reason of noise emission, visual dominance, shadow flicker or reflected light; there must be a realistic means of securing the removal of the installation when redundant and of restoring the area to its former or an approved alternative use, and there should be no unacceptable intrusion into the landscape of the surrounding area. As these can be up to 500 feet tall standing on concrete bases bigger than 3 double-decker buses it is difficult to see how they will be removed and restored in a delicate, complicated and evolved landscape.

All this counts for nothing in the push for renewable energy but the very economics of the industry have been challenged. Why are the government ignoring facts from scientists, ecologists and economists? It is because this debate is about political will versus landscape protection and economic common sense. Glib comments about turbines cutting down CO<sub>2</sub> emissions do not stand up. Untold tons of pollutants are pumped into the atmosphere during the process of making cement for these constructions and transporting the material to the sites. Turbines need backup at all times by conventional power, which emits in the process, the very gases that are saved by the windmills. This backup is needed for wind is erratic, whereas we need stability of voltage and frequency on the national grid. The annual saving of CO<sub>2</sub>, based on

reduced generation from gas, coal and nuclear fuels is calculated to be less than five jumbo-jets emit in a year of normal operation and this negates the purpose of our wind power industry. The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution forecasts perhaps three quarters of our CO<sub>2</sub> pollution coming from aircraft by 2050! Government expresses concern about climate change, but cynics suggests that they are more worried about the strategic impact of the world running out of fossil fuels. There are actually larger known reserves of all fossil fuels, than there were 20 years ago despite an increase in the extraction and use of such resources. If this were not the case, the price of such resources would soon begin to skyrocket as they became rare. We are much more likely to stop using coal, oil and gas because we find cheaper and more viable alternatives and not because we run out of them. Most coal, oil and gas fields are closed down because it becomes too expensive to extract or process the materials. If no alternative is found then the price will go up and these will become economically viable again.

Why are we building wind turbines and paying nearly three times as much for their electricity when other options are so obvious? Why are we building the biggest passenger jet the world has ever seen? Why do we not reward people for saving energy? Many of us argued when the debate started that the promises of power from this source did not stack up and I get little pleasure now from saying I told you so. I see nothing remotely renewable about the lost limestone countryside desecrated to make the enormous amounts of concrete needed to support these monstrosities. I loath the despoiled skylines of many of the most beautiful parts of the countryside now and increasingly disfigured by the giant turbines and the electricity pylons required to transport such electricity as they produce to the national grid.

A recent independent report supports the view that turbines are not able to operate efficiently in many of the locations where they have been sited to the detriment of the environment.

It was always argued that they needed to run at least at 50% efficiency to be viable. The government's own targets were based on 30% bearing in mind the subsidies and beneficial trading arrangements they gave them but many forecasts suggested they would be lucky to top 25%.

The Renewable Energy Foundation which aims to evaluate all forms of renewable energy on a level playing field basis has worked out exactly what is being achieved and surprise-surprise, of those in England and Wales only those in Cumbria managed to creep over the 25% mark. A few in Scotland managed to just top 30% but power is lost in long transmission lines. There were numerous sites in England which failed to reach 10%.

The conclusion of the report is that the only place where these large turbines can be justified would be offshore but relatively near to major cities. Even then in England they would need to continue to enjoy massive subsidy and the report suggests 60-70% of the annual income from a wind farm comes by way of subsidy. Perhaps this fact is getting through as permission has just been given for two enormous wind farms in the Thames Estuary.

Scotland is promising to produce 40% of its needs from renewables which it is calculated will mean erecting turbines on 7% of its total land area.

I am encouraged by certain potential new developments with renewables especially filling now empty oil fields with CO<sub>2</sub> by reversing the old oil pumping mechanisms. Surely the financial incentives should differentiate between the various different technologies and their longer term promises for the market. Hydrogen fuelled cars? Better energy conservation? We must ensure demand reduction across all sectors and taxing aircraft fuel would discourage this major pollutant. The EU is to impose carbon trading regulations on aircraft which is a step in the right direction.

There is a clear need to plan for an appropriate energy mix which will ensure a secure and efficient supply of electricity from renewable sources, in locations which can accommodate them without adverse environmental impacts but in themselves they can come no where near solving the problem. They will not even match the lost production as our nuclear stations close down and those do not create any green house gases anyway.

New, potentially safer forms of nuclear power are needed and money being wasted on subsidising wind turbines should be diverted into this research. Present nuclear stations use nuclear fission with its 'dirty' waste product. Solar energy is perhaps the best of the renewables at present employed

but it shares many of the downsides due to unreliability of the weather, especially in wetter parts areas. Building regulations should however enforce some panels on all roofs to augment the grid and domestic sized wind turbines would also be acceptable. I have just spent a week in Sweden in a home where they pump Freon gas down 50 metres into the earth which returns heated. Every unit of energy used by the compressor to pump the gas is returned three fold. We could make more use of this technology.

To summarise; it takes energy and resources to produce the turbines and equipment which go towards the manufacture, building and maintenance of a wind farm system. When all the costs are taken into consideration, wind power turns out to be far more expensive per KW produced as present alternatives. Nuclear power may well turn out to be our best option in the long run. A representative of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England is quoted as saying that securing increased development of renewables need not cost us a degraded landscape. The CPRE support the development of a broad range of renewable technologies where they do not have adverse impacts on the local environment.

## **MOUNTAINEERING IN BOSNIA**

Before the Balkan war of 1992 to 1995 many British people spent holidays in the old Yugoslavia, and favourite resorts were Mostar and Sarajevo in modern-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Dubrovnik and the Dalmatian coast of Croatia. The war with Serbia put an end to all that, and it is only recently that tourists have begun to return to the area. Dubrovnik and the islands off the Dalmatian coast have recovered well from the turmoil, but the tourist recovery in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been much slower due to the extensive damage to buildings and the danger from uncleared minefields. Sarajevo is almost completely restored, but much remains to be rebuilt in Mostar. Apart from extensive damage to buildings in the town all the bridges there were destroyed, but these have all now been rebuilt, including the famous sixteenth century bridge so beloved by tourists. Restoration of this landmark was completed about three years ago with the aid of finance from The World Bank and UNESCO. The original plans of the bridge, constructed in 1532, were discovered and reconstruction has conformed as far as possible to these. I am not aware that before the war Bosnia

Valued features such as landscape, tranquility, ecology, heritage and amenity must be protected.

To meet the Government's aspirational target for 20% of the UK's electricity generation from renewables by 2020, the CPRE are concerned that we might require a wind farm 150% the size of the Lake District (over 1,000 square miles in area). No matter how many turbines we erect we will need to back them up with more conventional power stations for when the wind is not blowing at the correct speed. The national grid needs a consistent voltage and the more we use variably reliable sources the greater the risk of a massive close down like the one which hit much of western Europe last November. This was largely due to trying to accommodate the nearly 20,000 turbines producing about 7% of the power in Germany.

Energy efficiency and conservation plus reducing the need for road and air travel must be addressed. Kyoto was about reducing CO2 emissions to combat climate change not about building wind turbines. We cannot simply build our way out of climate change with new renewable capacity alone since we will not even be able to meet the increasing energy demand, let alone actively reduce our carbon emissions.

## **John Sterland**

and Herzegovina was frequently visited by climbers from Britain, and I cannot recall the publication of any article on this area in the YRC Journal, but I believe that now is the time to explore this country again.

Much of Bosnia is mountainous, and although there are few mountains over 2000 metres many of them are very rugged, and the land is very beautiful. My younger son Bill has lived in Bosnia for several years, and two years ago in April I spent a week with him in Sarajevo. He told me to take my walking boots with me, but I did not expect that he would arrange quite such a strenuous day in the mountains. It had been agreed that I accompany an acquaintance of his, Matias Gomez, and two others on an expedition to hills in the Jablanica massif North East of Mostar, close to the road to Sarajevo. Matias was at that time writing a book on climbs and hikes in the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the original idea was that the group would start from Diva Grabovica and attempt the ascent of Vilinac at 2116 metres, and this walk Matias in due course included in his book.

However, it was deemed that such ascent would be beyond my capabilities in view of the amount of snow which still lay on the hills at that time of year. It was therefore decided to go for an easier option starting about five miles up the road to Sarajevo between Jablanica and Konjic. Initially the walking was comparatively easy up and across a river bed to Kostajnica, where the real climb to a peak of 1,315 metres started. After about an hour we reached a climbers' hut above Kostajnica. This was located at the bottom of a very steep gully filled with huge boulders, and five Bosnian climbers were enjoying a late breakfast on the cantilevered terrace outside the hut. They advised us that we would be unwise to attempt the peak, since there was a considerable danger of rocks falling into the steep gully, and there were avalanches higher up. Keen to obtain information for his book our leader decided to ignore the advice, and we set off up the mountain. However, after about 300 metres we persuaded him that logic and safety precautions should prevail, and we returned to the climbing hut, where the local climbers (all youngish men) were still in residence. They were apparently very pleased to see that "the old man" had returned unscathed, and regaled us with copious quantities of their local brew, a very strong spirit. Thus fortified we abandoned the mountain and returned to base. Matias has since sent me a copy of his guide book, but our walk does not figure in it, presumably since we did not achieve our objective. The book describes walks and climbs up 27 peaks over 2000 metres in addition to what he calls "other selected adventures" mostly around Sarajevo.

Walking in the Bosnian mountains can be a very dangerous activity because of the huge numbers of mines which even now remain undiscovered despite the efforts of several foreign organisations who are assisting in fragmented clearance work at considerable expense. Particularly dangerous areas are marked with skull and crossbones. These proliferate in the hills around Sarajevo, which was surrounded for a very long time during the war by Serbian forces which subjected the town to constant bombardment. Many other areas subject to intense fighting were extensively mined, and the danger from mines is emphasised by Matias in his book. While most of his walks are designated as "mine free", some are specified as "low risk" or "medium risk", although if walkers keep to the designated paths there is now little danger.

Matias' book is entitled "Forgotten Beauty", and mainly records expeditions to peaks of over 2000 metres. It is well documented with maps of the areas visited, and anyone who is interested could obtain a copy from the publishers, "Buybook" Radiceva 4, Sarajevo. Their web site is [www.buybook.ba](http://www.buybook.ba) and their E Mail address is [fabrikaknjiga@buybook.ba](mailto:fabrikaknjiga@buybook.ba). If you contemplate a climbing or walking holiday in Bosnia and Herzegovina I commend this publication to you, and I would be willing to lend my copy to any member who is interested. The best time to visit Bosnia for mountaineering is from late Spring to early Summer (mid May to mid July) and during the autumn from September to November.



The gully above the half way climbing hut

Sarajevo ridge



# LITERARY CORNER

## "The Mystery of Mallory and Irvine"

By Tom Holzel and Audrey Salkeld

This book was published in 1999. Tom Holzel is an American who took a leading part in mounting expeditions to locate the bodies of Mallory and Irvine. Mallory's was found, but not Irvine's. The camera footage taken high up on Everest was shown in a TV series. Audrey Salkeld, our Principal Guest at the 2005 Annual Dinner, is an Alpine Historian and who not only has studied the correspondence but also has climbed above 27,000 feet to have first hand experience of the mountain. The book brings together their discoveries.

The book deals with two mysteries. We know Mallory and Irvine died making an attempt on Everest on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1924. Last seen by Odell they were reported as "going strong" above the Second Step. There is however no evidence that they reached the summit, and for all Holzel's work, the probability is that they did not. Indeed, Salkeld states at the time of writing no subsequent party has left Camp VI (27,500') reached the summit and returned alive. So much for the first 'mystery'.

The second mystery is deeper and hardly discussed. Why were Mallory and Irvine the lead climbers? Mallory's claims were strong. For many years he had been recognised as an outstanding rock climber, with balance, reach, determination and strength. He was fit, a tremendous 'goer'. He was the darling of the Alpine Club establishment. Salkeld has had access to the correspondence between the principal participants held in the Alpine Club's files, and as a good historian, she takes a more objective view.

The letters reveal that Mallory was notorious for being careless. It was said that he was quite likely to forget his boots. On the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> June 1924, he succeeded in letting the cooking stove roll out of the tent and over the precipice: no hope of a hot drink for Odell when he arrived as back up, nor for them on their return. He also lost his compass, and set off on that fateful morning without one. He was not technically minded. He first rejected oxygen as he did not understand it, but when he saw the way it helped in 1921, he was

converted. It was to him a miracle worker that would get him to the top. He knew that at 37, 1924 would be his last chance to achieve glory. He did not want a partner who would give a second opinion, hold him back. He knew what he wanted. It was for him to be all or nothing: end of story.

Although many thought Odell would have made the better support, Mallory wanted Irvine. Irvine was very strong, and very willing to undertake all chores - getting snow for water, cooking, carrying, tidying. He was studying engineering. He understood oxygen, and even better was prepared to learn how the oxygen cylinders - suspect from the start - dispensed the gas. On the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> June 1924, Irvine had had to lost several precious hours taking cylinders apart to endeavour to get two working pieces of equipment. Irvine was young, inexperienced; he was never going to second guess Mallory's decisions or recommend retreat. He was therefore the compliant technically strong obliging nursemaid that Mallory knew he needed.

In 1921 the name of another George had been mentioned. George Finch was born in Switzerland and had more alpine experience than others. He was technically strong and understood the strengths and weaknesses of the oxygen masks and equipment. But these credentials were undermined: he had not been through the 1914 -18 war as Bruce, Noel, Odell, Mallory and the rest had. Serious doubts arose that Finch, not shy at giving his opinion, "would not fit into the mess". Some letters even call him "a shit". Finch went on the 1921 expedition, master-minded the oxygen, showed how useful it could be, but was not invited again. One suspects that Mallory saw him too much as a rival.

"The Mystery of Mallory and Irvine" is a fascinating insight into the Everest expeditions. It has perhaps rather a dramatic title not entirely warranted, but it does reveal the undercurrent of social concerns and technical illiteracy pervading the first three Everest expeditions. It is easy to be critical of those concerned, but they were doing something new, they were on a steep learning curve but which they did not master. In other sporting activities, choosing a team or a crew (sailing comes to mind) has proved to be more tricky than apparent at first sight. Good sportsmen tend have big egos, and the Leader has to have the determination to keep everyone on track. That's not a mystery, that's life.



## Northerner

Dennis Armstrong

Marie Hartley, Yorkshire social historian living in Askrigg, Wensleydale, died in 2006, aged 100, the passing of an institution.

She had collaborated with her friend Joan Ingilby, and together they collected facts and photographs for over fifty years, and created a unique record of the moorlands and dales of North Yorkshire that they loved. They were responsible for many books, drawings, poems and other records of the traditions, folklore and lives of the people of their beloved county. In 1999 they received honorary masters' degrees from the Open University, having been awarded the Yorkshire Archaeology Society Silver Medal in 1993 and the MBE in 1997. Joan Ingleby died in 2000.

A number of their delightful books are actually in our library at Lowstern and whilst I have not been able to determine whether they are still in print they are well worth a reading. Ian Crowther would particularly commend one poem to you, written by

Joan in 1943 and published by Smith Settle of Otley ISBN 1 85825 037 4.

Northerner

I belong to the lands of the North,  
to the wind, the snow, and the gales.  
I'm at one with winter's wrath,  
with the stones and soil of the dales.  
Whose long broad-shouldered hills  
bring tears of love to my eyes,  
like a roaring spate down the gills  
or a rainbow lighting the skies.  
To float on the waves of content  
I shall not need a blue patterned sea;  
a moorland flecked with cotton grass sails  
is freedom enough for me.

I shall travel abroad to the South,  
enjoying the soft cafe days.  
I shall taste strange food in my mouth,  
and watch foreign people and ways.  
I shall thrill at each sound and sight  
I shall reach for the sun though it burn;  
until, in the cool of one night

## The Hike - Author Don Shaw

first published Tideswell Press (2004)

ISBN 0-091-90607-5 Ebury Press (2005)

Review by Iain Lang

With an extensive array of accounts of desperate endeavour in distant places cluttering the shelves in book shops, out-door establishments, and, for all I know, in YRC members premises, this book is definitely in the "and now for something entirely different" category. Unlikely to appeal to dedicated "hard" men, this is the antidote to tales of great daring in the Andes or Himalayas, being an account of walks (hikes) done in the Peak District by three retired blokes living in the Derby area. The word "hike" isn't often heard in YRC circles. Is it less "U" than walk? A dictionary defines a hike as a "long walk, usually done for pleasure"-so that's OK. Mind you, we in the YRC don't use the word "ramble" all that much.

The intrepid trio are Phil, Freddy and Don (the latter happens to be the author). Phil believes that the ageing process can be delayed by obsessive exercise and consuming every health supplement on the market. He rejects the concept of defeat, and one can imagine him not taking prisoners! He is immune to rural charm, and he is the leader, self-appointed but not contested, and responds to the title "NAVIGATOR" (although to Freddy he is the "Gruppenfuehrer"). Phil and Freddy are as chalk is to cheese. Freddy is a tadge grumpy, does not rejoice at the prospect of strenuous walks, has a laudable interest in wild flowers, and a preoccupation with the "meaning of life". There are regular verbal skirmishes between the two with frequent reference to the "hike rules" (can you imagine this in a YRC context?) Don is the "straight man" of the trio, sometimes called upon to give an opinion, or even a casting vote, but is not to be found with his head above the parapet too often.

Apart from a passing interest in the walks/escapades, much amusement stems from the verbal exchanges that take place as they walk (which can be classed as banter), the people they meet, and the situations in which they find themselves - like Freddy developing hypothermia somewhere between Chelmorton and Taddington. One of their contacts was the biggest collector of Trabant cars known to man, this establishment being situated at Middleton -by-Youlgreave.

Ladies don't figure too much in these accounts, but there was a chance encounter with three members of the fair sex-all identically dressed in the latest hitec clothing, with a GPS at their disposal, who were "not sure of the way" on Kinder Scout. Phil took it upon himself to offer assistance, but met his "Waterloo" (as a navigator, that is!). A Buddhist retreat was discovered, and the relationship was developing apace when a meditation session was blown off course by Freddy experiencing an uncontrollable bout of flatulence!

Our trio were agreed on one thing, namely the deplorable standards of the modern world; noise, vulgarity, mobile phones etc. - coming across a party of hikers on the Tissington Trail wearing TRAINERS was beyond the pale! Freddy's individual response to modern trends was to go in the opposite direction by employing "one-downmanship" - if you want to know more read the book!

You should have the gist by now. - a bit like the hikers answer to Three Men in a Boat (were it not for the dog!). No less a person the Sir Ranulph Fiennes is a fan of this book, and his complimentary comments are to be found on the front cover.

So, as the younger generation would say CHILL, and as the waitress says when she slaps the meal of your choice in front of you ENJOY.

## "AND NOBODY WOKE UP DEAD "

by Jan Levi. The Ernest Press, H/B pp 264 £16.

" The Life and Times of Mabel Barker,  
Climber and Educationist"

Review by Bill Todd

I have been trying to think of a sparkling introduction to this review but I owe it to my gentle readers first to explain the title. It put me in mind of a sentence in the Old Testament which went " When they woke up in the morning they were all corpses ." In this case there were no corpses and only one minor injury.

German family occupying the expedition's reserved carriage. They said " It's open, we come in."

Mabel promptly replied "That's the policy that didn't work isn't it ?" Remember this was 1922 and analogous with Don Whillans' famous response to a German on Everest,

" We've beaten you twice at yours".

In August 1922 Mabel and her friend Millican Dalton, self styled Professor of Adventure, Castle Crag College, Borrowdale University, took a party of thirty for a camping/mountaineering holiday in the Austrian Alps. As part of the holiday Mabel and Millican and three novices decided to cross the Schonbichlerhorn to a hut in the next valley. They missed the way and got up a thing called the Talgenn Knopf instead. The weather worsened and one of the pupils came onto the rope and " hurt her leg a bit ".

If you are interested in mountaineering, climbing and education this is the book for you. I am attaching a few notes on Mabel's career to show something of the kind of person she was and what made her tick.

December 1885 Born into a prosperous family in Silloth, Cumbria.

1892 - 95 Attended village school.

1895 Mabel's mother died.

"sent to Perth to live with three maiden aunts.

1895 Attended Miss Burton's School at Perth.

1900 Boarding school in Cornwall.

1904 Cheltenham Ladies College.

1907 B. Sc. From London University.

1908 Taught Botany at Limerick

1909 Accepted a post at Saffron Walden Training College.

1910 Met two pupils at Ambleside and walked them to Wasdale. They were welcomed by Mrs. Whiting in spite of their wet state.

The result of this was that they couldn't get down in daylight and the five of them spent the night huddled together under a mackintosh. Mabel's words, used in Millican's obituary, were " nobody woke up dead ." Perhaps Millican should have been de- frocked of his professorship.

I cannot resist retailing an incident at Cologne on the train journey in. There were problems with a

1913 Hired camping equipment from Millican for a student camp at Seathwaite. Taken up Napes Needle  
 1914 First World War starts.  
 1916 Went to Holland to work with the War Victims Relief Society of Friends. Started a Scout Troop and invented the Wolf Cubs.  
 1917 Taught at a progressive school at Kings Langley.  
 1921 Led Kern Knotts Chimney, joined FRCC.  
 1923 First meeting with Frankland, on Gimmer.  
 1924 On 4<sup>th</sup> ascent CB, first female ascent with C.D. Frankland.  
 1926 Traversed the Skye Ridge.  
 1927 C.D. Frankland companion on many routes died on Gable.  
 1937 Descended CB  
 1961 Died peacefully.

This is one of the few biographies largely written by the subject. Jan Levi has had unlimited access to diaries, letters and journals. The result is that the reader feels as if he is present at the adventurous scenes described.

## HIGH ENDEAVOURS

The Life and Legend of Robin Smith.

'The Power-packed Agreeable Smith'

My grandfather, being self educated, had a well stocked bookcase. As a boy I used it as a supplementary lending library. Grandad's highest praise for a book was "A mine of information."

Similarly this book is a mine of information on the climbing and social scene of the fifties. Even for a reader with no interest in climbing or mountaineering it is difficult to put down. It is also difficult to appreciate how much this young man's performance overtopped that of his contemporaries. In the opinion of one who was acquainted with him he was "necky". Not only did he climb things no-one else could but he did it in the worst of gear, reverting to Woolworth's plimsolls for a period.

The reader is made to feel the pain that engulfed Robin's friends and family on his premature death. What could he have achieved in a normal life span?

The illustrations, all black and white, are a joy. There are the usual child and growing up photos then pictures of such luminaries as Arthur Wakefield, E.Wood Johnson and Jack Carswell whom I remember chatting with at a dinner some years ago.

I was particularly pleased to see the picture of Mr. & Mrs, MacRae of Glen Brittle. They were very kind to Joan and me in 1959 on our first visit to Skye.

Every good book should have a puzzle. One of the smaller prints is captioned "Mabel on Akerman's Corner, Almscliff" I cannot find any reference to a climb of that name on Almscliff or on any other crag.

The obvious way to find out the actual location of the picture is to take the book to Almscliffe but it's a bit cold for that now.

Just watch this space.

by Jimmy Cruickshank Canongate h/b pp 374 £16.99.

Review by Bill Todd

No-one knows exactly what happened between Robin and Wilf. Noyce setting off down the mountain in cheerful mood and then taking a fall of 800 metres. Anatoli Sevastianov watched them descend. One of the pair disappeared as the slope steepened then the other member suddenly hurtled downwards. Anatoli's impression was that the higher figure had been jerked out of balance by a pull of the rope.

With due respect to all concerned this reviewer cannot help reflecting on the number of accidents which happen on the way down. This has happened to some of the best, including the first President of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club, Arthur Dolphin. However careful you tell yourself to be there is bound to be a slackening of vigilance and in that sort of country it only needs one foot to slip on one dodgy hold and curtains.

But of course the book is not all about death and it is possible for the writer to visualise some of the

routes mentioned though not the alpine ones. I did do the Leac Mhor in Ardgour while the sun shone and can well appreciate what it would have been like for Robin to climb it in 1959 streaming with water. To add to the difficulty both climbers had empty tummies because Robin had forgotten the food. Any member of a Yorkshire club, any Yorkshire club, would have been drummed out in a hollow square after a crime like that. Perhaps it was due to regular self-denying ordinances that Robin was the only Brit who could keep up with the Russians on the Pamirs expedition. We learn also that John Hunt worked very hard and did achieve a fair degree of climatisation.

What a different world it was then. Noyce was quite taken with his arrival at Garmo Glacier just a week after leaving London Airport. Robin's mother, at the height of the newsbreak made her way up the road to the friends who had a TV.

Read this book, but don't expect to finish it quickly, I am on my second time through.

I am appending a summary of Robin's life hoping it will help

1938 (30 August) born at Calcutta , India

1946 started school at Morrison's Academy, Crieff.

1950 started at George Watson's Boys College, Edinburgh.

1950 ascended Braeriach

1954 ascended Ben Nevis

1955 attended a JMCS meet

1956 climbed Crack of Doom

1957 first ascent of Blockhead.

1957 led Cenotaph Corner

1958 West face of Blaitiere

1959 first british ascent Walker Spur

1960 Fischerhorn North Face

1962 (24 July) died on Pic Garmo.

## A Catalog of Himalayan Mountaineering Correspondence. 2nd. Edition.

Armand E Singer, Robert F Gould. with contributions by and published by George Alevezis.  
A private publication marketed by Geoffrey Flack.

Only 100 copies were made of this greatly expanded second edition of 210 pages with illustrations, some in colour. I missed the first edition, but having expressed an interest, was offered and gladly accepted a copy of this edition. Word processor produced the catalogue has 3 sections, The Mount Everest Adventure by Singer, 81 pages, Peaks other than Everest by Gould, 109 pages, and a mountain index list.

It is a good read for mountaineers, historians and collectors and makes some interesting observations.

The editors do not attempt to define mountaineering correspondence and rely upon the contents of collections and what collectors collect. Letters, autographs, postage stamps, covers, cachets, postcards and mountain events are included.

The catalogue starts in 1895 with a unique cover (envelope) of pre Everest material. It almost certain this cover contained the last letter of A.F.Mummery written before he disappeared on the Diamir Face of Nanga Parbat. It is addressed to one of his climbing party Geoffrey Hastings Esq. Alpine Climber, Somewhere near the Gilgit Road, Rawal Pindi. It would appear the mail was not delivered as the reverse side is stamped 'not claimed', and raises the question how did the letter get saved and where had it been until offered by a philatelist dealer to Armand Singer?

The Everest section catalogues 307 items starting in 1921 and finishes with few additions, perhaps never to be added to by this author, in 2005 but stopped including material not having a reasonable excuse for inclusion around 1985.. An exception being items celebrating new routes, winter ascents, all 8000m, ascents without oxygen. Why? Many expeditions produced postcards and other philatelic material to finance the climb by devoted climbers, indeed the Everest 1924 attempt issued some 40,000. I have 2 of them. Mr Singer suggests all major peaks have been climbed and celebrated, virtually all variations of season, route and equipment worth the effort have been achieved. Too much material of little significance is being produced.

In the section 'other peaks' Robert Gould has also used the 1985 cut-off date but making an exception for 21 entries for 1985 to 1996 and some of these are postage stamps.

Clearly the authors are thinking that the interest to collectors and historians is diminishing. The mountaineering index was intended to record material issued peaks over 7500m but have included collectable material for other heights but only recorded the first of an ascent of a particular route. Dhaulagiri has 18 such firsts and Pumori 12 firsts giving the reader some idea of the amount of material generated. 286 mountains are indexed and 177 are below 7500m the lowest sentinel at 5180m.

Commercial interests abound including forgeries, I have one, cost me £5, which has nothing to do with endeavour. China is to open a mobile post office on the slopes of Mt Everest, material will be carried down weekly by truck to Lhasa/Beijing. 2002 was the United Nations International Year of the Mountain an opportunity for almost all postal authorities to produce stamps and other printed material which bore no relationship to any endeavour.

Finding a card or cache from Goran Kropp who in 1996 cycled from Sweden to Nepal, carrying all his gear, climbed Everest and cycled home again would restore faith. Walt Unsworth in Everest history records 13 exp. in 1986, 14 in 1987, 19 in 1988, 29 in 1989, 24 in 1990, 32 in 1991, 34 in 1992 and so on with 40 in 1996, 97 & 98. P91 of the catalogue records the 2003 Royal Navy and Royal Marines Exp. to the North Ridge. 50th Ann. ascent, proceeds to a worthy charity the Fund for Sailors, so I contributed, but never received my cover. I am sure the leader Commander Jackson will have done his bit but it was either sold on to a dealer or the stamp removed for reuse. The fate of many such items.

Many philatelist have revolted against the frequency, cost and quantity of commemoratives produced world wide and stopped collecting. Completeness is no longer a requirement in the philatelic world.

The second issue recognises the impact of Ebay on the availability and price of material - CAVEAT EMPTOR.

A great deal of interesting information is in safe hands, and probably a lot somewhere in the UK.

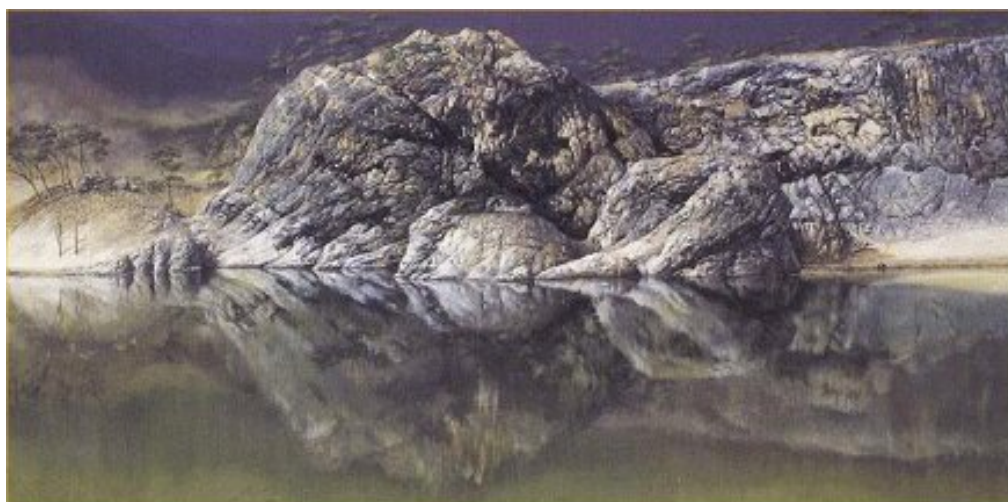
Alan Linford.



I would like to share this picture with you.

It is said to be in Burma and whichever way you look at it, you can only describe it as remarkable

RJD



## **CHINA CAVES UPDATE**

Following 6 years working in Guangxi and having pushed the Jiang Zhou system to over 37km, the second longest cave in China discovered so far, members of the YRC plus a few Craven PC and other northern cavers have now directed their efforts to Hubei province and the Lichuan area, not far from the Chongqing border.

This part of Hubei is famed for Teng Long Dong (Cave of the Soaring Dragon), originally explored for 30km by Belgians in 1988.

The main river, the Qingjiang is one of the major tributaries of the Yangtze and disappears into the enormous entrance of Teng Long Dong. It emerges ten km later, much enlarged at a huge resurgence cave, and it is not thought that any through trip has been made. The latest expedition late last year discovered a mixture of tiankengs (huge dolines) and big river caves. Just to tempt them back the best find was made just as the expedition drew to a close, with several survey teams frantically recording data as fast as they could.

The caves in this area have a fascinating history; During the Japanese invasion in the Second World War II, the Hubei provincial government decamped to Lichuan, well protected from the Japanese military invaders by the high mountains and a number of caves were used by them as 'offices'. Bank Cave held all the bullion for Hubei suggesting that a visit could pay real dividends, although presumably the money is now long gone!

The December / January edition of Descent gave coverage to the ongoing efforts of our members and also a comprehensive book review of the full report of the earlier expeditions.

This runs to 158 pages with detailed surveys and drawings and 200 photographs (£10 - ISBN 0-900265-43-4).

A copy is in the library at Lowstern but further copies can be purchased to assist in the funding of future efforts. I suggest you contact Ged or Bruce if you would like a copy although I did produce a comprehensive supplement last year based on the same material. It does go into much more technical detail than I felt appropriate for the journal.

Descent sum up the book as follows:-

"The China Caves Project has been running for over twenty years, placing a series of expeditions in the field (sometimes more than one team at the same time) - in conjunction with the Institute of Karst Geology in Guilin.

One of the groups under this umbrella is formed from cavers belonging to the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club and others in the north of England, and this led to the 17th and 18th China Caves expeditions to Tian'e and Fengshan. The results of these trips are significant. That to the Tian'e county of Guangxi province in February and March 2004 explored and surveyed a series of caves including Wei Dong before shifting attention to the nearby Fengshan county, where the Jiang Zhou system was left with ongoing leads.

With massive passages beckoning, a return was hastily planned and in October 2004 eleven cavers flew from the UK to push Jiang Zhou to 29.2km, the third longest in China.

The two expeditions amassed a total of 48.6km of survey data and helped Chinese authorities to gain Geopark status for the area at the same time educating official circles about the damage caused by removing speleothems for sale abroad.

The detailed results of these trips are documented in this major expedition report, a weighty spiral-bound book. Photographs and maps are printed in colour throughout; one, of the geology with over-marked cave passages from British and Italian expeditions to the region, is a fold-out A3 sheet plus the report is issued with a loose, high-quality AO survey of the Jiang Zhou system. Plenty more surveys are, of course, dotted throughout the text.

Do not expect to receive a dry set of pages documenting every foot of passage. There is much here that is readable, from what are effectively chatty articles on what it was like to deal with the Chinese dignitaries and locals as well as what the ethnic groups are like, such as the Yao people.

In fact, the first ninety-odd pages are taken up with tales of exploration and working with the Chinese, before the appendices kick in.

These cover the expedition members, biology of the species found from porcupines to bats, glow-worms and beetles, water chemistry, data collection techniques, extensive expedition diaries, a synopsis of sites and a detailed description of the caves.

The final few pages reproduce an overview of the expeditions published in the Journal of the Inter-national Union of Speleology.

Clearly, a lot of effort has been put into preparing this report — this is not a 'let's have a jolly good time and move on to the next trip' affair, the writing has been organised and well presented for readers and posterity"

The latest report from our team follows---

"The Lichuan 2006 expedition returned from the 'White Tiger' area of central China in November. The 6 week expedition visited three areas in the two separate provinces of Hubei and Jiangxi.

The principal exploration area was focused in Lichuan county where the team explored the massive Ten Long Dong cave and other areas nearby. Teng Long Dong was previously explored by the Belgians in the late 80s.

A China Projects team comprising of mainly YRC, a few CPC members together with Hungarian and Australian cavers had been asked by Lichuan local government to help Teng Long Dong achieve Geopark status. A key feature of the exploration included following the Qinjiang rivers progress through the cave and help the Ministry of Land and Resources scope the possibility of building an artificial tunnel to prevent flooding in the city.

The size and ferocity of this river had thwarted the Belgian attempt in the 80s and a sizeable flow of approx. 20 cumecs in Autumn proved extremely challenging for the 2006 team.

The river still needs finishing! Teng Long Dong's status will be voted on this September, however

its entire length was not increased to any extent so it still remains only China's third longest cave (paradoxically, a relief for many team members have been slogging away on the Jiang Zhou system in Guangxi for the last 3 years securing its status as China's second longest!)

The expedition also found and descended some beautiful Tiankengs in the Taombo just east of Lichuan and found an exciting river resurgence emerging 10 k. from the Tiankeng area.

A reconnaissance was made to Genshi county to the north of Enshi on the Chongqing border where many interesting but not extensive caves were found.

The final week of the expedition moved to Jiangxi province an autonomous region of east China famous for the start of the 'Long March' and one of the main rice producing centres of China.

After visiting the capital Nanchang, the team concentrated on the Wannian area exploring the Shengnong Dong cave a jointed system often as straight as a die for kilometres!

Overall the expedition explored and surveyed approximately 24 kms of cave passage. Scientists collected extensively to gain a better understanding of the geology of the areas and found abundant insect life found in the caves and noted many new species.

A fuller report will follow."

Keep up the good work lads and try and find time to keep us posted.

Members on this trip

Harvey Lomas  
John Whalley  
Shaun Penny  
Tony Penny  
Bruce Bensley  
Ged Campion  
Dave Williams  
Graham Salmon  
Eddie Edkins.

# **ON WHERE WE TREAD, BASIC CONCEPTS OF HIGHWAY LAW.**

Footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways are highways in exactly the same way as the busiest trunk roads and the same body of law applies, although obviously there are differences in detail.

Roads have always been indispensable to civilisation. In this country Roman roads built almost 2000 years ago still form the basis for some main roads. It seems clear that many Roman roads themselves followed even earlier trackways. With such a long history it is inevitable that the law relating to highways should also have a very long history. Some of it appears to be based on Roman law and many of the basic principles form part of the common law.

Common law is the basis of many of our laws and, indeed, our freedoms. It represents the immemorial customs of the nation as they existed before the Norman invasion and before a formal legal system was created. Neither the monarch or Parliament has ever laid down the principles of the common law, but over the years they have been codified through successive decisions of the various courts.

On the foundation of common law there has been built a complex structure of statute law; that is law laid down by the monarch or Parliament. In view of the antiquity and importance of the highway system, it is not surprising that there are records of statutes concerning highways going back at least 800 years. Since then there have been very many different laws about highways. This creates particular difficulties for rights of way workers who often need to consult old documents whose importance can only be judged by a knowledge of not only what the law is now but also how it stood at the date of the document.

## **Public Rights of Way**

A highway may be defined as an area of land over which the public have a right to pass and re-pass (i.e. a right of way). The status of a particular highway defines who exercise this right. The term public right of way is often used (albeit technically incorrectly) to describe those highways that are of a status that is less than carriage-way (e.g. bridleways, footpaths etc).

There are private and public rights of way, the difference being as to who has the right to pass. On a public right of way the right extends to the public at large, that is to say everybody. On a private right of way the right of passage is limited to certain people. Today, private rights of way are generally regarded as easements, that is to say that the right of passage belongs with a parcel of land and the owner or occupier has the right to pass over someone else's land. Our main concern, however, is with the public rights of way.

It is important to be clear that this is a basic right of the public and in no sense requires the permission of the landowner. The owner cannot withdraw the right and even if the public cease to exercise the right it will not lapse.

On the other hand, public are limited to that of passage and the owner may treat as a trespasser anyone who goes beyond these limits. For example, in a case last century it was held that a person who repeatedly walked along a moorland footpath so as to disrupt shooting was a trespasser. The key point appears to be that a member of the public should be making a genuine journey from one point to another. The purpose of the journey is immaterial; there is no reason why the journey should not be for pleasure or for exercise, nor on reaching the destination why the return journey cannot start immediately. But to travel repeatedly up and down a short section of route, for example to annoy the owner would be likely to be regarded as a trespass.

Traditionally there were four different types of highway recognised by the common law, depending on the rights that the public have. These were footpaths, bridleways (or bridle roads), driftways (or driving roads) and carriageways. The common law rule being that the greater right includes the lesser so that each succeeding type includes all the rights of the preceding ones. In addition to the traditional common law types of highway there are other types that have come into existence through statute, that is to say through laws that have been passed by Parliament. The main types of statutory highway likely to be met with are cycle tracks, motorways and canal towpaths.

It is important to appreciate that the legal status of a highway in terms of what rights of way exist over it is quite separate from the physical condition of the highway. This works both ways. The owner of land over which a highway lies may construct a road so long as he does not obstruct the rights of the public. Many farm access roads lie along footpaths or bridleways, and it is not particularly unusual today for these private roads to have a tarred surface. On the other hand, by no means all public carriageways are surfaced. Roads were not generally surfaced at all before the nineteenth century when stone surfaces were introduced. Tarred surfaces were not generally introduced until the development of motor traffic after about 1920. Although the bulk of ancient carriageways were improved to become the basis for the surfaced road network of today, this by no means applied to all. There remain significant numbers both of pre-nineteenth century roads that were never surfaced, and of the improved stone roads which were never tarred. Many of the roads that were never surfaced are now grass-grown and are thus referred to as green lanes, although the term has no legal meaning.



The nineteenth century stone roads usually survive as rough stony tracks, although failure to maintain them since the end of horse-drawn traffic means that many are fast deteriorating and becoming overgrown. Although these roads have rights of way for all traffic, they are almost exclusively used by non-motorised traffic and thus form an important adjunct to the network of bridleways and footpaths. They are increasingly being recognised as important for owners of horse-drawn carriages who are not allowed on bridleways and prefer to avoid motor roads.

### Once a Highway, Always a Highway

One of the most vital aspects of English highway law is expressed in the maxim "once a highway, always a highway". What this means is that no highway can cease to exist simply through disuse. This was decided by the courts as long ago as 1315 and has very important implications for public paths. Indeed, it is probably this principle which is responsible for the rights of way network in England and Wales being the envy of many other countries throughout the world. It is logical to assume that most other developed countries originally had networks of footpaths and bridleways, but as economic development rendered them obsolete for day-to-day use they disappeared. But here the fact that the right of way could not be lost through disuse has meant that much of the network has survived to form the modern system of recreational paths. Even as close as Scotland highways can be lost through disuse and arguably Scotland has a much poorer rights of way network as a result.

There are, of course, a variety of ways in which highways can be extinguished through proper legal procedures. In addition a highway ceases to exist if the ground on which it runs is destroyed, for example by coastal erosion. But where the ground still exists the courts will not presume a highway to have been extinguished unless there is evidence that the proper procedures have been adopted. This means that if it is possible to prove that a highway existed at some point in the past and there is no evidence of it being properly extinguished, then it must be assumed that there still is a highway irrespective of how many years it has been disused. This is an important point where it is necessary to establish the existence of a path from historical evidence.

In the light of the importance of this legal principle and the fact that it has been accepted law for almost seven centuries, it is a curious fact that so many people in the countryside believe that paths will cease to exist if they are disused for some years.

### Ownership of the Highway

It should already have become clear that a central part of highway law relates to the balance between the person who owns the land over which a highway runs and

the public who have the rights over the land. It follows that there is no general rule that a public body owns the land over which a public highway runs. The majority of old highways run over privately owned land although in more modern times it has become necessary for additional land to be purchased for new roads and in these cases the land under the road will usually be owned by the highway authority.

Although at first sight ownership of the land under a highway appears to be of limited value, there are certain advantages. The owner has the air rights above the highway, which may be valuable in a city centre. He has rights under the road, which allows him to build cellars under the road or tunnel right through if he owns both sides. This also gives him mineral rights, which can be valuable in some areas. Of particular importance are the reversionary rights, which means that if the highway is legally extinguished then the land reverts to him.

This means that a decision to extinguish a highway cannot be rescinded by the highway authority because all control over the land has passed out of their hands. Finally, the fact that the land is privately owned means that a person who goes beyond his basic right of passage commits a trespass against the owner. For example, riding a horse along a footpath without the owner's permission is a trespass against the owner.

In early times highways were the right of way rather than the physical construction. The common law position was that the owner of the land owned the surface of the highway. Although there was a public duty to maintain the highway there was no power to improve it. If the highway authority tried to improve the highway the owner could take action against them for trespass. If this had continued modern roads would have been impossible and so the law was changed during the nineteenth century. The modern position is that the surface of all highways that are maintainable at public expense are now vested in the highway authority which is also allowed to improve it.

### Trespass

When trying to understand the issue of it is necessary to appreciate the difference between criminal and civil law. Criminal and civil law represent two separate branches of the law, each with their own set of courts. Criminal law applies when a person is alleged to have broken the law and committed an offence. He may then be tried in a criminal court and if found guilty may then be punished. In contrast, the civil courts exist to decide disputes between individuals. For example, if A alleges that B owes him money, then he can sue B in the civil courts. If the court finds that B does indeed owe the money then it can order him to pay it. An extension of this is that A can also sue if he feels that B has wronged him in some way on which he can set a cost, for example if B has through his negligence damaged A's property.

At common law a trespass is not a criminal act. Thus apart from a few exceptions described below it is not possible for anyone to be prosecuted for trespass. Trespass is treated as a wrong for which the person aggrieved can only seek redress through the civil courts. The owner may order a trespasser to leave his property and if he does not then he may eject him without using unreasonable force. He may sue him for damages through the civil courts, but this is rare because there is normally no monetary damage which can be claimed.

In some special cases there are specific laws to make trespass an offence. It is, for example, an offence to trespass on a railway line, a motorway, a canal, reservoir land, Forestry Commission lands, military areas and so on. But these represent only a small proportion of land and represent an exception to the general common law approach described above.

### Highway Records

There are essentially two key sets of legal documents, which pertain to record public highways. These are the Definitive Map and Statement; and the List of Streets Maintainable at Public Expense

#### The Definitive Map and Statement

The concept of Definitive Maps was introduced by Part IV of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, which has now been succeeded by successive pieces of legislation, which will be the subject of other papers. The aim of the legislation was however, to record and maintain an accurate record of all known public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways etc) in England and Wales.

The primary value of these documents is that they provide legally conclusive evidence of the existence of the rights recorded upon them. This conclusive status is however without prejudice to the possible existence of higher rights (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Section 56)

#### The List of Streets Maintainable at Public Expense

The List of Streets Maintainable at Public Expense, commonly referred to as a Council's Adopted Roads maps or similar, is also a valuable record of the existence of public highways, although its status of often misunderstood (particularly by local authority highway engineers). This document, whilst technically called a list, often comprises of a set of maps, which theoretically show all of the streets (highways) that the highway authority is duty bound to maintain.

It is important to recognise that the List of Streets does not provide evidence of the actual status of the routes recorded upon it, other than to say they are public highways. This is because its primary function is

that of a record of maintenance liability, and not of status. Therefore in theory, in terms of status, the List of Streets only provides evidence of a minimum of pedestrian rights and can not be said to infer any higher rights.

In view of the fact that the vast majority of public rights of way that are recorded on the Definitive Map, are also highways maintainable at public expense, they should actually be recorded on both sets of documents. Unfortunately this is often not the case despite highway authorities being under statutory duty to keep these records up to date.

#### Dedication of Highways

At common law a highway can only exist either because it existed in the year 1189 or has subsequently been dedicated by the owner and accepted by the public. The year 1189, incidentally, marks the death of Henry I during whose reign the English legal system was started. Customs of any sort that existed prior to that date are assumed to have existed from time immemorial and to be legally binding and this extends to highways. This is the legal basis of our very ancient highways such as those based on Roman roads.

Normally, however, highways come into existence by dedication and acceptance. This means that the owner voluntarily dedicates the route to public use and the public indicate that they are prepared to accept it as a highway. For a highway to come into existence both elements have to be present; it is no use to have dedication without acceptance or acceptance without dedication.

This process may be a formal one with the owner entering into a legal agreement to dedicate the highway and the highway authority on behalf of the public formally accepting it. But for many older routes there is no record that any formal process was ever gone through.

In such cases, however, the law can presume dedication. If a route has been used by the public for a good many years as if it were a highway with the public believing it to be a highway and the owner has known this and has done nothing to show that he has any objection, then the law will presume that it must have been a highway all along.

It is important to note that public use alone does not create a highway; it creates a presumption that the owner dedicated it which can be overturned by other factors. For example, if the owner put up a sign to the effect that he did not intend to dedicate then irrespective of the level of use he could not be presumed to have dedicated it. Where an owner allows the public to use a route but does not wish it to become a highway it is sometimes the practice to close the route one day a year to demonstrate that no dedication is intended. By a similar argument, a dedication cannot be presumed

where use by the public is so secret that the owner could not have become aware of it.

Under the common law there is no fixed period of use that must elapse before a dedication can be presumed. Each case is considered on its merits. Where use by the public is considerable or where the owner has acted in a way consistent with dedicating the way, then the period can be quite short. On the other hand, if public use is slight, then a very long period would be required for dedication to be presumed.

To simplify the process, a more precise set of rules has been laid down by Parliament although the common law rules continue to apply as well. Under the statutory procedure, and in very simple terms, if public use can be proved over a twenty year period then dedication will be presumed unless the owner can show not only that he had no intention to dedicate but also that he made this clear to the public.

The main value of the legal principles concerning presumption of dedication is in deciding arguments concerning alleged highways. If an owner disputes that a particular route is a highway it is not necessary to establish when or how the route first came to be used by the public. It is only necessary to consider use over the previous twenty years. This is obviously of importance in protecting the many highways that have existed for centuries and where there are no records as to how the route came into existence.

Although the normal method of creating highways is by dedication and acceptance, it is also possible for highways to be created by statute. In some cases acts of Parliament specifically create a highway; more frequently the law authorises a procedure to be carried out that will create a highway. The highway will not come into existence until all the procedures specified in the law have been carried out, but once this has been done there is no need for the highway to be accepted by the public. This means that, in theory at least, a statutory highway may exist that has never been used by the public.

Highways created by statute are of particular interest to rights of way workers because there are normally records available of the process by which the highway was created and these are often conclusive evidence of the existence of the highway today, even if long obstructed or disused.

It should be noted that as there is no dedication of a highway created by statute, there can be no conditions or limitations on the dedication other than those specified in the process by which the highway was created. For example, a highway created by an enclosure award cannot be subject to a common law right to plough or to any limitations of gates and stiles other than those set out in the enclosure award.

## Limitations and Conditions of Use

Because highways are assumed to have come into existence through the voluntary dedication of the owner, it is only reasonable that the owner is allowed to make some conditions. There are limits on this; a highway must be available to all the public all the time so that it is not possible to dedicate a highway only to residents of a particular area or one open on certain days only. The owner may, however, retain the right to do things on his land, which would otherwise be an illegal obstruction.

A key principle is that the public must take the highway as they find it. This means that if a highway was difficult to use at the time that the public accepted it then they later have no basis for complaint against the owner if it remains in the same condition. Features that legitimately make the highway more difficult to use are described as limitations on the dedication. For example, if a path runs over rough and stony ground then the owner is under no obligation to make the way smooth.

It is also possible for a highway to be dedicated subject to a condition allowing the owner to maintain features that would otherwise be regarded as an obstruction. The most common example is a condition that the owner may have gates and stiles. If there is a stile or gate on a highway at the time that it is accepted then the owner has a right to keep it there. It is important to note that it is impossible to dedicate a highway subject to conditions that prevent it being used; for example, it is not possible for a bridleway to be conditional on the right of an owner to maintain a stile on it.

A highway may also be dedicated subject to a condition allowing the owner to do things from time to time that would otherwise be an obstruction. The condition most frequently met with is known as a common law right to plough. If at the time a highway is accepted it is regularly ploughed then the dedication is assumed to be subject to a condition that the owner may continue to plough it.

Similar to the right to plough is the right to hold a market in a public street. It is interesting to note that the courts have held that where a market was not held for more than twenty years the right to obstruct the highway ceased because there was a later dedication not subject to the condition. It would appear from this judgement that where a path is not ploughed for a period exceeding twenty years then the common law right to plough will similarly disappear. Also if a gate or stile which is a limitation on a dedication is removed and not replaced over a period of twenty years then that condition also ceases.

## Making Changes to the Network

As discussed above, highways are a legal entity, and are governed by a wealth of legislation dating back many

years. It is also clear that a highway exists over a specific linear alignment and that its course cannot alter, or indeed be altered, at will. Any change in the alignment of any public highway must be made by way of a formal legal process. In the past this was undertaken by the granting of court orders, or acts of parliament. Whilst these remedies are still available today, most public rights of way are diverted or extinguished using legal orders, introduced under various Acts of Parliament, which are generally known as Public Path Orders. Such Orders are open to public scrutiny and objection, and may only be made if the specific criteria of the legislation have been met. Public Path Orders are discussed in more detail in other papers.

### Maintenance of Highways

For as long as there have been highways it seems to have been accepted that the public had a duty to maintain them. Traditionally this duty fell on the inhabitants of each parish who had the job of maintaining the highways in the parish for the benefit of all the public. Originally this was done directly by the inhabitants' own labour. In most areas this gradually evolved into a system where a payment was made instead of providing labour, the money being used to pay for maintenance to be carried out. The old system was not fully done away with until 1835 at which time the "statute labour" system was replaced by a formal system of highway rates. Since then various reorganisations have taken place and now the responsibility for maintenance rests with county councils, unitary councils or metropolitan district councils except for trunk roads which are the responsibility of Central Government through the Department of Transport.

Until the nineteenth century it was the rule that all highways were the responsibility of someone. In most cases the inhabitants of the parish were responsible but there were some cases where private individuals were responsible instead. As a general rule, however, once a highway came into existence it had to be maintained by the public. It was found that this could give rise to abuse because someone could dedicate a highway, which was essentially a private access road, and then the public would be obliged to maintain it. With properly constructed road surfaces increasingly coming into use in the nineteenth century this could have caused a serious financial burden on the public. To avoid this, the concept of adoption was introduced. This means that a new public highway is not automatically maintainable by the public until it has been formally adopted. Highway authorities have the option not to adopt roads that are not properly constructed or of little value to the public.

The adoption process was first introduced in 1801 for new carriageways created as part of enclosure awards and was extended to all carriageways in 1835. It was not extended to new footpaths and bridleways until 1949.

As it was not essential for all highways to be adopted, it follows that nobody may be responsible for the maintenance of a highway. In the early years the test of public utility was applied fairly rigidly and roads that were essentially local access roads were not adopted. Later, however, it was found that this gave rise to public health problems and local authorities were given powers to force urban streets to be properly constructed and then adopted. This applied even if they were of little use to the public, as is the case with cul-de-sacs and courtyards. The effect of the different approach in the early years has been a legacy of private streets; that is streets which are not maintained by the public although they may well be public highways.

The fact that a highway is maintained privately does not affect the rights that the public have over it. The highway authority still has a duty to make sure that it is not obstructed and can take legal action to enforce maintenance. The duty to maintain only extends to keeping the highway in the same condition as it has always been, which bearing in mind the ancient origin of such roads normally only means to green lane standards.

It should be noted that many local authority staff confuse adopted highways with highways maintainable at public expense. Because roads will not now be adopted unless they are properly made up it tends to be assumed that unless a road is made up then it cannot be maintainable at public expense. But this is a fallacy as highways maintainable at public expense include roads which existed prior to 1835, roads formally adopted in the nineteenth century which have never been made up to modern standards and most public paths.

The requirement to maintain a highway essentially means to keep it in the same condition as when it was dedicated. The common law responsibility to maintain did not allow even an optional power to improve the highway and a highway authority attempting to improve could be sued for trespass by the owner. But in modern times the highway authority has been given wide powers to improve any highway that is maintainable at public expense.

In addition, the highway authority now has a lawful interest in the surface of a highway, which is maintainable at public expense. This appears to have been introduced originally to allow the authority to have control of adopted streets but as it has been extended to all highways maintainable at public expense, it now covers the surface of rights of way even where there is no made up surface.

RJD

I am obliged to Robin Carr Associates, Public Rights of Way Management and Consultancy Services of Northallerton, for this information.

# OBITUARIES

It is with regret and fond memories that we have to record the passing of three stalwarts of the club.

Conrad Jorgensen, Arthur Craven and Dan Jones have passed away since the last journal.

It is only a matter of months since Conrad rang me after one of my circulars chasing up material, to let me know that his days of contributions were probably behind him.

## CONRAD WILLIAM JORGENSEN

Conrad was the son of a Danish father and an English mother, indeed his mother was a Rangdale (a Yorkshire girl) which must suggest some connection with a Danish heritage.

After completing his National Service in the Danish Navy Conrad came to England to study textiles, at the then Bradford Technical College, which had an international reputation and, in due course qualified as a Chartered Textile Technologist, becoming an Associate of the Textile Institute.

When World War Two started in 1939, Conrad wanted to do something for the war effort, but as a foreign national at that time, he could not join any of the armed forces. Instead, he worked for the Forestry Service, a very important job. Home grown timber was vital for the war effort, that is in the context of the threat to Great Britain's ability to import as a result of the large amount of merchant shipping being sunk by the German U-boats.

In 1947 Conrad became a naturalised British subject, having decided to make his life and career in the United Kingdom. In 1958 he and Sheila were married at East Morton Parish Church.

Conrad's work in textiles was particularly connected with exports and he made frequent trips to Scandinavia and Europe at the time when travel facilities were more rudimentary than now. His knowledge of European languages was helpful: you do not find a lot of speakers of Danish or other Nordic languages in Bradford or the UK.

Conrad joined the YRC in 1948 and was most active with the Club in the 50's and 60's when he served on the committee and also as a Vice President.

Conrad was a yachts man, oarsman, climber, but above all a man of the trees.

It was while he and I crewed for Jack Woodman on his yacht "The Tai Mo Shan" off the West Coast of Scotland in 1957 that we decided to form a tree growing enterprise.

Initially Scandinavian Nurseries was a hobby for us both. However after a few years Conrad decided on career change from textiles and made the company into a successful forestry business.

Ahead of his time he became involved in environmental aspects of motorways as distinct from the purely engineering side.

He had a great interest in the care and repair of ornamental trees and realised that to perpetuate this it was necessary to train a team of experts, who later became known as tree surgeons. Conrad founded Northern Tree Surgeons and North Eastern Tree Surgeons, which embraced Scotland.

Prior to the eventual sale of the tree surgery business, Conrad had been offered the Royal Warrant for his work with the Duchy of Lancaster. He was a founder member of the Arboricultural Association and served as the Association's vice president for several years.

He was a Council member of the Royal Forestry Society and in 1975, together with the Architect W.T.C Walker, he was awarded the Heritage Year Award for his work at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal. Conrad was, in addition, a Fellow of the British Academy of Experts and served as an expert witness in numerous court cases.

For fifteen years, from 1971 until 1986 Conrad served an Honorary Danish Vice-Consul for Bradford and Leeds, and for this service to Denmark he received the order of the Knight of Dannenbrog. This award, from the country of his birth gave him a particular pride because, although he had become a British subject in 1947. He was a Dane at heart, as well as a true YRC member who always sent a letter of support to each new President.

Albert Chapman

## DANIEL MICHAEL HOWARD JONES

6<sup>th</sup> September 1929 to 21<sup>st</sup> January 2007  
YRC Member 1948 -2007



Dan will be best remembered by the Club for his part in the 1957 Jugal Himal Expedition and the to attempt the Great White Peak at the head of the Dorje Lhakpe Glacier in Nepal. The expedition is well documented in YRCJ No 29 Vol. VIII 1958 and is again covered in an article in this journal to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, written before we heard of Dan's demise. Not only was Dan a competent rock climber and mountaineer, he loved cross country running and enjoyed going underground; he writes well of his potholing activities in Fairy Hole Cave in Weardale describing it as "The wettest, muddiest, vilest, most miserable cave it has ever been his misfortune to enter." YRCJ No.28 Vol. VIII

On the expedition bonding meets on Nevis and in the Alps prior to the expedition Arthur Tallon says he found him to be enthusiastic, supportive and very competent whilst climbing with him on the Ben and remarked on his patience and efficiency when dealing with the numerous calls on his medical skills dealing with sick Nepalese people on the expedition on the trek from Kathmandu to Base Camp.

His last contact with a number of Club members was in 1993: The expedition leader, Crosby Fox's widow, Rosalie, asked if she and her family could see the expedition film. Arrangements were made during a Club meet at Lowstern when the family and our members on the meet saw the film at Harden House. Dan without hesitation agreed to bring his film of the expedition. Rosalie's husband and the children had seen slides of the expedition and heard Dan's voice taped in London before the team left for India. Now they were able to see him in motion. It was a poignant and happy occasion for both the family and the club.

A Club connection was with Dan's father Maurice and the Stembridge family; he was their GP. At that time the family lived at Pannal, just outside Harrogate. Dan read medicine at Newcastle University where began climbing and potholing. Dan retired as senior psychiatrist at Dingleton Hospital and was highly respected in his profession being responsible for several developments in the practice of science.

The Club was represented at his funeral in Melrose by Ken Aldred, John Lovett, David Stembridge and David Smith.

David Smith

## Personal life and schooling

Family home in Pannal, near Harrogate, Yorkshire.  
Son and grandson of Medical General Practitioners.  
Mother died when he was three years old.  
Attended Loretto School (1943-47) and was a cross-country team member.

Dan is survived by his wife and four children, and by his stepmother and two younger half-sisters.  
Joined Yorkshire Ramblers Club in 1948.  
National Service in the army for three years.  
Durham University Medical School.  
Joined Durham University Cross Country Running Club and Caving Club which pioneered deepest exploration of Fairy Hole Caves, Ludwell, Tyneside.  
Team doctor and photographer of The Yorkshire Ramblers Club 1957 expedition to the Himalayas.

Had an insatiable appetite for exploration and discovery which in 1990 led to his chance find and discovery of a neolithic longbow in upland bog in the Tweedsmuir hills, Dumfriesshire, the oldest longbow found in Britain and Ireland (carbon dated to 6,000 years old) which can be seen on display in the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh.

Photographed a 'Brocken Spectre' - a rare visual phenomenon, seen by Dan as he climbed up out of mist into early morning sunshine, The sun behind him cast his shadow on to the mist below with a circular rainbow of colours around his shadow's head (seen at Sgurr a Mhaoraich, July 1997, 7.15 a.m.).

## Professional life

Medical and surgical House jobs in Harrogate, Yorkshire, and Denby, North Wales.

Start of psychiatric training was at Denby Mental Hospital.

Registrar post at Wallingham Park Hospital, Surrey, 1960.

Worked at The London Hospital and Clayburry Hospital, Epping, Essex, before moving in 1968 as Consultant to the Scottish Borders at Dingleton Hospital, Melrose, Roxburghshire.

Became Senior Consultant at Dingleton Hospital, which was a pioneer in 'Care in the Community' approach to psychiatry.

Made a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

After retiring in 1995 he was a Non-executive Member of the Borders Community Health Services Board for four years.

In his retirement his joys were hill walking, landscape photography, world cinema; latterly continuing to do all these despite painful arthritic ankles that required him to walk with trekking poles. He always had a daily walk with his beloved miniature dachshund, Finn.

He never lost his insatiable visual hunger, as seen in his uniquely observed photography. He sought out and loved eccentric objects and artifacts, which he collected over many years.

He was a tolerant, warm and non-judgemental man.

## Family life

Married Valerie Shelton in 1963, who was an occupational therapist at Wallingham Park Hospital, Surrey.

Father of Karin 1964, Stephen 1965, Michael 1967 and Lisa 1970.

With three children under four years old he moved to Melrose, Scotland, with Valerie in 1968 to work at Dingleton Hospital, taking up his first Consultant post.

He inspired all his children to take up hill walking and mountaineering, and photography, but only his youngest daughter braved caving!

His eldest daughter is a Consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in Harrogate, eldest son a research doctor of ecology now working in scientific publishing in Edinburgh, second son a fine arts graduate, Glasgow School of Art, and graphic designer in London, and second daughter is a Psychology graduate and is now production manager in a costume jewellery manufacturing company in London. In 2005, Dan became a grandfather to Katie Elspeth Hawkes, who is daughter of Karin and Iain.

"Dan had a wonderfully creative and varied life, and we can now think of him free from physical shackles.

We are blessed to have loved and known him."

Valerie Jones

## ARTHUR BRAITHWAITE CRAVEN

1956-2007



Arthur Craven died on 14th April 2007 at the age of 91.

When he was four the family moved to India where his father was an auditor of the Singer Sewing Machine Company. They lived in Lucknow, Cawnpore and Colombo before moving to Darjeeling where the school play-ground allowed the young Arthur to view the majestic slopes of Kanchanjunga.

The family returned to England three years later when Arthur was eight, settling in Leeds where he eventually won a scholarship for Leeds Gram-mar School. His first job found him at the Leeds Library where he was to spend the whole of his working life in that distinguished institution, becoming Chief Librarian and finally Director of Library Services for the whole of the Leeds area.

Those early years in the rarefied atmosphere of Darjeeling gave him a head start when it came to non stop ascents of Scottish peaks and his breathless colleagues were often astounded at his somewhat leisurely pace up on the steep crags, often chatting happily to those who required all their energy just to keep within hailing distance. The tireless and cheerful embrace of the longest days meant that his company was eagerly sought, both as a leader and a most reliable companion. I recall an incident on Ben Mor Coighac when half way up the mountain we were overtaken by a group of younger men who stopped briefly for a chat before moving on Arthur absent mindedly attached himself to the younger party and was a good 300 yards noticing we were languishing far below.

Camping was always Arthur's joy, his long involvement with the world of books meant that he could invariably put us right when there was disagreement over some intellectual matter. He was always up there when there was work to be done and since he was better organised than most of us; tents were tidier and we could find our gear more readily when he was around.

Fortunately for the Club his many talents were available to us from his earliest days with in the YRC. He served as Assistant Editor from 1960 to 1970, Editor from 1970 to 1983, Librarian from 1962 to 1971 and President from 1970 to 1972.

Members and friends who have known him will retain the fondest memories of a delightful companion whose friendship will always be treasured. His son, Patrick and his daughter, Virginia and grandchildren, survive him.

The Club and his many friends were well represented at his funeral.

Alan Brown

# THE YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS

Jeff Hooper

In the summer 2006 YRC Journal someone mentioned the Three Peaks Race; all right! - so it was the South African Three Peaks Race but it gives me the opening needed to write another of my articles - as our tactful editor said - dating from the middle of the last century.

Although the round of Ingleborough, Penyghent and Whernside has been walked as long as anyone can remember, the Yorkshire Three Peaks Race was held for the first time only in 1954 with six competitors. The start was in Chapel le Dale at the Hill Inn, with checkpoints at the summit of Ingleborough, Horton in Ribblesdale, the summit of Penyghent, Ribblesdale, and finally the summit of Whernside, otherwise runners were free to choose own route. The race is always held on the last Sunday in April, starting at 11 a.m.

The first time I ran the race, in 1968, competing runners changed into running kit in a large tent equipped with trestle tables to hold clothing. Normal cross-country running kit was worn, shorts, singlet, maybe a tee shirt under a singlet, or, in cold weather a long sleeved vest. Shoes had leather uppers and a sole with either triangular ridges or the once universal studded sole.

Preparations included lots of Vaseline, under arms, on the chest, toes, over socks, inside shoes and other places where chafing may occur. A thick layer over the face, arms and legs gave protection from cold and rain. This was before lightweight rain-proofs had become affordable. An unbroken line of Vaseline drawn above the eyebrows from one side to the other diverted sweat away from the eyes.

From the field adjacent to the Hill Inn, all set off up a steep hill heading for rough country and Ingleborough summit. Over the fairly level ground the field had two main groups. Most runners followed the leader heading for the plateau generally east of the summit, but some broke away and headed for the steep pyramid intent on a direct attack on the summit.

Starting the climb to the plateau I was in about fiftieth position but up the short, steep ascent by the broken wire fence I made up about ten places. It is difficult to contain ones speed at this stage of the race it is so easy to be carried away by ones

enthusiasm, forgetting that there are 20 miles or so and the three peaks still to go. At this point it seems almost as steep as climbing a ladder with runners packed together dodging falling stones and rusty wire, the remains of a long disintegrated fence.

On the plateau the race turned right towards the summit, ran round the trig. point, doubled back in almost an easterly direction before swinging round after about half a mile towards the southeast for Sulber Nick. In mist, the tendency is to go immediately from the summit, southeasterly and finish up in Clapham instead of Horton. I reached the summit in 29 minutes in about 40th position. Turning onto the downhill stretch I was being passed by runners going at breakneck speed over the rough ground. Carried on by the rush I threw caution away and strode out. Not many features distinguish the route to Horton, just the odd wall or shooting box act as a guide to Sulber Nick. As I followed my leader over rough ground downhill, the heel of my outstretched leg hit a lump of limestone over extending my ankle and jarring it severely. From here onwards I slowed down and again runners streamed past. On level ground or on soft going I moved well enough but running downhill was difficult. Horton in Ribblesdale was entered by a steep rough farm track, then straight on to a tarmac road and over the river bridge in the centre of the village. Supporters lined the street and shouted encouragement. Mike Davis of Reading was in the lead in a time of 49 minutes, I was half way through the field of 142 runners in a time of 61minutes 14 seconds. The last man went through in 80 minutes.

Penyghent summit was now everyone's target as the race followed a rough stoned track for a few hundred yards before turning through a gate in to grass fields not usually open to the public leading to the usual track to Penyghent. Everyone then headed in a direct line for the summit not caring that it was the steepest possible route. This is the part that from a distance looks like a dark grey vertical cliff. Up this part progress was by using hands as well as feet, I pushed with my legs and pulled with my hands on the grass tufts and mud as hard as I could with each intake of breath and yet appeared to make no progress. Constantly striving upwards as on a treadmill and moving slowly it seemed to take a forever, and all around, in front,



behind and on each side others also struggled upwards. Anyone who slackened effort was overtaken. It was a great relief to reach the top, (1 hour 37 minutes, and 22 minutes behind the leader).

From Penyghent to Ribbleshead is a long stretch of open rough country. The route starts with an old wide track leaving Penyghent at a steady downward angle; I had been relying on this to make up time. Lower down one crosses the grain of the country, up and down small ridges that make it difficult to see a runner more than about 50 yards ahead, so if the weather is misty it is essential that the route is known. I left Penyghent summit and was dismayed to find that my damaged ankle prevented me from running at my normal speed downhill or on rough country. Here my friend and club training partner, Bill who had been a minute behind me on Penyghent forged ahead. I watched him go further and further away.

Mike Davis was still in the lead, running with confidence; he had won the race for the previous three years, was the record holder and knew the country intimately. As far as I was concerned it was no longer a race as I hobbled along as fast as I could feeling frustrated at the slowness of my pace. Glancing at my watch I calculated how much behind schedule I had fallen and estimated my arrival times for Ribbleshead and the finish. I knew that when I passed the Mountain Rescue Team I must put on the best show possible as they had the power to pull me out of the race if they thought that I was incapable of arriving at the next checkpoint. The approach to Ribbleshead was over grazing land, level and close cropped, so I was able to speed up, and when I reached the road in spite of feeling tired, hungry and thirsty I was able to go at a good pace. Here some of my club mates met me by the roadside. The stage from Penyghent to Ribbleshead of about six miles had taken me 79 mins. against my hoped for 50 mins. (Bill was now 18 minutes ahead and Davis 58 minutes). My friends had a bottle of orange squash saturated with glucose powder and they watched in amazement as I drank it all, then I was given all their spare rations - three plain biscuits. Feeling fortified I pressed on under the viaduct to climb Whernside, the last of the three peaks.

I had run cross-country in winter, for many years, and also enjoyed mountain walking. Because of those two interests I liked the idea of the Three

Peaks Race but my experience had made me cautious for I knew how quickly the weather can change and how quickly one can become cold when scantily clad and tired. A great number of the runners were not familiar with the terrain and no one was dressed to withstand the cold that would be immediately felt if one could no longer move quickly enough to generate body heat. The conditions in a long race ensure that competitors are approaching an advanced stage of fatigue in the later stages of the competition. Should the weather turn foul with poor visibility and rain or snow particularly on the Penyghent to Ribbleshead section I believed that many runners could be in distress. I had thought through this before the race and as I began the ascent of Whernside the thoughts came back to me as cold, wind driven rain, lashed down on my bare arms and head, penetrating my cotton vest and shorts. I was tired, I was going slowly, I could not run because of the gradient and tiredness, and turning goose-pimpled with cold. Should I go back or on? I looked to the direction from where the wind was blowing, saw clear sky and went on. Five or ten minutes later I was drying out in warm sunshine. Once more I had to use my hands to reach the top after 3 hours 54 minutes, 58 minutes after leaving Ribbleshead. (I later found that the race had been won 16 minutes before I arrived at Ribbleshead).

Coming off Whernside I could see the Hill Inn and the crowd below in the sunshine. Again I had difficulty downhill but pushed on, the finish was in sight. Once on the narrow farm road to the Hill Inn I managed to raise some speed to the finishing line. In the competitors' tent I sat on a trestle table and lifted each leg in turn with both hands, that was the only way that I could reach my feet to unlace my shoes. In the corner of the tent was a beer barrel provided for the runners; too late, it was empty!

Statistics:

Mike Davis of Reading won in the record time of 2 hrs 40 min 34 secs.; 142 runners started, 118 finished.

I finished 114th in 4 hours 25 min 41 secs. 7 lbs. lighter in weight. My friend and training partner Bill finished in 3 hours 46 min 53 secs.

It could have been worse; in 1970 it was, there was a foot and a half of snow on the tops, cold wind and hail.

# CHIPPINGS



## WHAT A WALLY

Sir Wally Herbert, born in Yorkshire and now aged 72, is one of the last survivors from the 'Heroic' period of polar exploration. An accomplished author, after dinner speaker and talented artist he tries to pass on the spirit of the polar world, its wildlife and its native people, to we mere mortals.

Most people accredit the American Robert Peary as having been the first to reach the north pole but there is doubt that he new exactly where it was and probably only got about 100 miles from it. There is no doubt however, that Wally got there in 1969.

During the 45 years of his polar career, he has spent 15 years in the wilderness regions of the polar world, and travelled with dog teams and open boats for well over 25,000 miles - more than half of that distance through unexplored areas that no man had set foot on before. In the Antarctic in the late 1950s and early 60s he mapped on foot some 45,000 square miles of new country.

He is "the greatest polar explorer of our time" according to Sir Ranulph Fiennes and a "phenomenon" according to the late Lord Shackleton.

Wally Herbert was knighted in recognition of his achievements and Prince Charles described him as a man whose "determination and courage are of truly heroic proportions"

In more recent years he retraced the routes of some of the great polar explorers; Peary, Sverdrup and Cook in the Arctic and Shackleton, Scott, and Amundsen in the Antarctic. Along the way he has earned his own place in polar legend with his incredible 3,800 mile trek with three companions and forty dogs - the first surface crossing of the Arctic Ocean.

Considered by many as the last great journey on Earth, that journey (16 months in 1968/69) from Alaska to Spitsbergen via the Pole of Inaccessibility and the north pole ranks as one of the three truly great geographical challenges

with the first ascent of Everest and the first surface crossing of the south pole the others. His trip was the longest and many think the most hazardous.

In the Arctic he has a mountain in the Svalbard Group named after him and a mountain range and a plateau are named after him in the Antarctic. Amongst his many awards are the Polar Medal and bar, the Explorers Club Medal and gold medals from a number of geographical societies.

Several recent talks have made the case for doubting Peary and giving our Wally his due credit for this epic endeavour.

## TITANIC DISCOVERY

A cave believed to have the biggest chamber in Britain has been unearthed in the Peak District in Derbyshire. 'Titan' is nearly 200 feet higher than the previous record holder, Gaping Ghyll and Titan is almost as tall as the London Eye; its main shaft is 460ft (140m)

Found by Dave Nixon, it has only been within reach of the relatively small number of expert cavers who knew of its existence.

He began searching for it after reading an account in a university library, by James Plumtree. Dave Nixon examined the old journal written 200 years ago describing a network of caves which went further than Leviathan, the well-known cave system near Castleton where Titan has been found. The stream empties out into Peak Cavern.

Cavers thought the entrance to the system must have been blocked, and spent seven years removing boulders before they found a way into the bottom of the cavern. When they started climbing up, it went on for ever and they were amazed when measurements showed just how high it was.

They have now bored down from the surface to create an abseil entrance.

## GEE UP

Above Haverthwaite in the woods overlooking Windermere, you may come upon a man working with his horses, as has been done for centuries; felling trees and hauling out timber. He is employed by the Woodland Trust on the gradual process of restoring Great Knott Wood on the western side of the lake. For hundreds of years the wood was coppiced to produce oak bark for tanning, charcoal for smelting and bobbins for the spinning and weaving machines of the Lancashire textile mills but fifty years ago as the demand dried up the woods were felled and replaced with boring ranks of conifers which in wildlife terms, was a disaster. The dense shade cast by these fast-growing species eventually led to the loss of many plants characteristic of ancient woodland, including dog's mercury, bluebell and wood sorrel. Those that have managed to cling on are in isolated patches and under stress from lack of light. There are pockets of old oak trees, some lovely flushes of alder woodland, pockets of ground flora and a wealth of ferns, mosses and lichens and the WT hopes that by carefully increasing the amount of dappled light coming down through the trees, they can extend and restore these ancient-woodland communities, making them robust again.

On such a sensitive and steeply sloping site, there is only one way to go about it; horse power. While lorries and tractors are fast taking over in other areas of England these are not very practical in the Lakes and despite traditional horse loggers being something of a dying breed, they are still used for conservation management by bodies like the Woodland Trust.

The benefits that horses bring are phenomenal. Where woods have fallen into lack of management, they can get into places machines simply can't reach; they don't damage quality timber in doing so; they don't cause compaction or rutting underfoot, so they don't harm the ground flora; they're not noisy; they don't burn fossil fuels; and they're beautiful to look at. In the section of Great Knott Wood where the team have brought the light back in, the horses' hoof prints have long since faded but there'll be a dramatic change underfoot next spring. All the ground's been scarified by the dragging effect of the timber, which will speed up regeneration many times faster than if machinery had gone in.

## HUMAN SPIDER

On the subject of great achievements if you want something to truly terrify you for next Halloween, I can commend a DVD to you.

28 year old Dave Macleod made the first traditional climb graded E11 when he finally managed Rhapsody on Dunbarton Rock. A short film of the ascent and his preparation and disappointments has been showing at various mountain festivals and is now available on DVD.

It is the stuff of nightmares for mere mortals but if you want a copy they can be had from various outlets or from the climber himself ([www.davemacleod.com](http://www.davemacleod.com)). If you visit his website you can watch snippets from the climb.

## ALPORT REPORT

In my youth when living in Manchester I spent many days wandering the Peak District which in those days could be easily accessed by train or bus.

We all have our favourite walks and areas, often different depending on seasons, but I always liked the comparative emptiness of Bleaklow and the Derwent watersheds and spent several weekends camping quite illegally and undisturbed beside the shooting cabin in Lower Small Clough.

One of the great pleasures when walking out was to come upon the Alport where the water tricking over the shallow bed rock is pleasantly warmed and provides super swimming holes where pools form below the falls.

This hidden gem has been under threat at various times since then but its future now seems secure.

When Severn Trent and the Forestry Commission were refused permission to put in an extraction road the water company decided to sell up and it passed into the hands of the National Trust.

They have decided against any car parking provision and in a rolling programme intend to return the area to how nature intended by progressively removing the coniferous plantations.

Hopefully this isolated wild life haven will remain just that and continue to welcome those few walkers who know it exists.

## A SLIPPERY SLOPE

Last winter saw an increase in the number of fatalities in the Scottish mountains. The Cairngorm mountain rescue team put this down to global warming. It gets the blame for most things these days.

Their leader has said that the shortage or lack of snow and ice makes what would otherwise be fairly simple routes, much more challenging.

"When the snow and ice is not there, you have fewer options. You have to be more precise and more of a gymnast. It is a completely different way of climbing"

This situation is only going to get worse and there are forecasts that Scotland will be largely snow free by the end of this century.

Problems for outdoor enthusiasts pale into insignificance when viewed against the global problems that climate change will bring but they are no less a problem for all that.

As snow becomes rarer even in the alps skiing is under serious threat. The Scottish industry may be wiped out and many alpine resorts could be severely curtailed. Some resorts conscious of this threat are doing their bit and amongst other ideas have already put solar panels on lifts.

As skiers heads to the slopes in numbers, their own contribution to the problem of the climate and of fragile mountain environments is not something they like to admit. This sport is very damaging on several levels. Mountains are ripped apart to open up wide runs that skiers demand and roads are bulldozed high into the hills.

Thousands of skiers fly to resorts for fairly short stays, adding to green house emissions enormously as they do so. When nature provides insufficient snow, chemicals and large amounts of electricity are used to create it, and massive diesel-hungry machines then shape the slopes to order and these, together with snow cannons are a visual eyesore as well as an environmental disaster.

More energy is used to carry skiers up slopes and the lifts themselves are being driven higher into the summits. This is a disaster both for the environment and other sports such as

mountaineering and it needs a fresh look at the way people use mountain environments, and what they expect to find in them.

We must call a halt to the blind expansion of ski resorts. To truly enjoy mountains, we will have to be prepared to put more effort into it, which should give a greater sense of satisfaction. More mountaineering and high level trekking as we know it, perhaps more cross-country skiing or when there is still good snow possibly snow shoeing.

We ourselves can always do more to preserve our world as we would wish it to remain. We could make greater efforts to car share when travelling to the mountain areas

## YOU TAKE THE HIGHWAY ---

Whether you take the highway or the low way who will get there first depends on whether there are any obstructions. There are a lot of myths about responsibility for obstructions and nuisances on public paths and it is a complex area of law.

Apart from specific responsibilities, the Highway Authority has a general duty to "assert and protect the rights of the public to... use... any highway" - Highways Act 1980 Section 130(1).

In addition, apart from specific incidents, it is a criminal offence if "a person in any way wilfully obstructs the free passage along a highway" - Highways Act 1980 Section 137(1).

If a public right of way is in a condition such that it is "out of character" the responsibility for putting it right can usually be determined from the general rules that:

The Highway Authority is responsible for maintaining the surface of public rights of way by putting right problems caused by public usage and other natural influences, maintaining structures that help the public to negotiate natural features and taking action against unlawful interference caused by third parties.

The landowner is responsible for ensuring the public can freely and safely negotiate man-made features, making sure their management of adjacent land does not interfere with the free or safe use of nearby public paths and problems caused by their predecessors.

Options open to us as path users to resolve obstructions and nuisances include to remove the problem, deviate around problem, negotiate with the landowner, report to highway authority, report to a user group or take out a private prosecution

Options open to the Highway Authority to resolve obstructions and nuisances include negotiating with landowner, community involvement, cross compliance, default powers or prosecution.

One area which seems always in dispute is that of Bulls in a field.

It is not lawful to keep a solitary bull in a field where the public have right of access no matter what signs a re put up to ward us. It is however lawful to let one loose if it is accompanied by a number of cows presumably as their mind is on other things.

There are of course exceptions; Certain named breeds may never be turned loose in a field with access and these effectively are the dairy species. The mechanics of rearing dairy cattle presumably leave these bulls rather frustrated and not a little cross.

One last issue is that of the notice warning of a bull. If this is not taken down when a bull is removed from a field this can be deemed obstruction by the farmer in that the sign could intimidate and deter people wishing to make lawful progress.

Having said all this, common sense must be employed. If you are chased by a bull climbing out of harms way can leave you treed for a long time. Best to run away if you can and downhill is the best option as bulls often trip up over their short front legs. Your first responsibility is to do nothing stupid. You should be very wary of going amongst cows never mind bulls if you have a dog. The cows see dogs as a threat and will attack them and there are regular incidences of people being crushed and even killed because they did not let go of the lead.

Cows very rarely mean any harm to anyone but if they have just been turned out to grass after a winter penned up or if they have been panicked by anything they can inadvertently do a lot of damage

They are heavy beasts.

## ACCESS

Access to the countryside is problematical to say the least. Access generally is becoming more difficult and more contentious despite or possible because of the right to roam legislation which probably did not go far enough. Paths are subject to complex law as I have mentioned and the act is trying to resolve that but the timescale (deadline 2026) is unlikely to work unless substantial more resource is provided.

Legislation has been attempted to try and gain public access to inland waters. A private members bill aimed to fill the gap left by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act which provided for access to open country on foot, but completely omitted to secure similar access to rivers and other inland waters. This is despite water being an important recreational resource which should be available to the population at large.

There has in fact been a public interest in securing freedom of access to inland waters as long ago as Magna Carta (1215) which had a provision against obstructions to navigation, but the legal position has now become obscure and complex, often to the detriment of public access.

Similar issues have been resolved in Scotland through the successful Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 - which established a statutory right of responsible access for everyone to virtually all inland waters there.

It is aimed at canoeists in particular but there are numerous other pastimes which would benefit not least sweaty walkers needing to cool off and the more insane amongst us who like to go becking.

Successive governments have encouraged canoeists in particular to seek to negotiate voluntary access agreements. From over 41,000 miles of rivers in England and Wales without a clear public right of navigation, only 500 miles of highly restricted access has been negotiated; some for as little as one day per year.

We all welcome the Government's statement that it "is a firm believer in the benefits of outdoor recreation on land or water. The visitors are good for the local economy and people who exercise regularly are healthier than those who do not. So we are keen to promote recreational opportunities

as widely as we can .....” We would however wish to see these pious words turned into some action.

Riparian owners of the riverbed and banks claim control of navigation up to the centre line of the river. In order to 'navigate' along a river the permission of the owners of both banks for the full length of the journey is required. This is similar to the problem my orienteering club can experience in using areas of the National Forest where there may be numerous owners of bits of the woodland.

Public access has been a hoary issue going back as far a human activity. It was for example recognised in Roman times when the Emperor Justinian recorded in his Codes (552 AD) that rivers and harbours are state property; and that the law allows public use of river banks, as of the rivers themselves: everybody is free to navigate rivers, and they can moor their boats to the banks, run ropes from trees growing there, and unload cargo. But ownership of the bank is vested in the landowners. There have also been numerous Charters and Statutes ensuring that existing public use was not impaired, or was extended, including a series of Navigation Acts.

It was as long ago as 1892 that the House of Commons first passed a resolution on the need for legislation for the purpose of securing the right of the public to enjoy free access to uncultivated mountains and moorlands especially in Scotland, subject to proper provisions for preventing any abuse of such right.

There was no mention of the similar need to secure the right of the public to rivers and other inland waters, to woodlands or to the coast and such rights are still the source of much debate.

I have previously expounded on the need for access to coasts and Natural England has just made its recommendations which have been widely reported. They are a much watered down version of what many of us would have liked to see and will in any event meet stiff opposition as there is no suggestion of compensation to land owners.

The Ramblers Association are currently campaigning for access to woodlands and river banks to be brought in as an extension of the CRoW Act.

## PLEA OF A HOUSEWIFE, ONCE HOUSE PROUD

Dust if you must.....

But remember...a layer of dust protects the wood beneath it. A house becomes a home when you can write 'I love you' on the furniture.

I used to spend hours every weekend making sure things were perfect in case someone came over. Finally I realized one day that no-one came over; they were all out living life and having fun!

Now, when people visit, I don't have to explain the 'condition' of my home. They are more interested in hearing about the things I've been doing while I was away living life and having fun.

If you haven't figured this out yet, please heed this advice.

Life is short. Enjoy it!

Dust if you must.....  
but wouldn't it be better  
to paint a picture or write a letter,  
bake pies or a cake and lick the spoon  
or plant a seed,

ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must,  
but there's not much time . . . .  
with wine or beer to drink,  
rivers to swim and mountains to climb,  
music to hear and books to read,  
friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must,  
but the world's out there;  
with the sun in your eyes and the wind in your hair,  
a flutter of snow, a shower of rain.  
This day will never come round again.

Dust if you must,  
but bear in mind,  
old age will come and it's not very kind. . . .

And when you go - and go you must  
you, yourself will become more dust!

It's not what you gather, but what you scatter  
that tells what kind of life you have lived.

Anon

## GETTING GREENER

Agreement has finally been reached with the EU to change our Rural Development Programme.

In future we will be doubling the amount of funding available to farmers for green schemes as the next step in the process of switching support for the sector away from over production to payments for making provision for wildlife etc.

Even with present levels of funding over 60,000 miles of hedgerow is being managed for wildlife and 3000 farmers have been paid to plant wild birdseed mixtures to encourage declining species.

Of great interest to those of us living in parts of the country with limited open access, it has also funded 166 miles of permissive footpaths.

Twice the funding should accelerate this process but farmers will not be getting richer as production subsidies will be reduced by the same amount.

## COAST TO COAST

The Wainwright Society has been joined by numerous other Lakeland walking and tourism organisations in pressing for a change of status for the coast to coast walk. Whilst not everyone's cup of tea this now iconic fellsman's 100th anniversary is thought the ideal time to try and gain the walk designation as a 'national trail' with the financial support that entails.

At almost 200 miles long and crossing the entire country not to mention the mountains along the way it certainly seems to justify such status.

Wainwright's guides may not have been as comprehensive as they might have been but those fells he covered were in immaculate detail and a work of art in their own right but this walk is perhaps to many of us his lasting legacy.

If you want to support this campaign for such status there is a petition which you can join to be found on the website of Eric Robson's Wasdale based company, Striding Edge. They have also produced a video of the walk.

[www.stridingedge.com](http://www.stridingedge.com)

## LETS HAVE MOOR ACTIVITY

As we dwell on a return to Edale, 75 years after the famous mass trespass which helped produce the National Parks we enjoy today, it is crucial to acknowledge that the very access we fought for is causing much harm to the moors I spent untold hours on in my youth.

I am a 'Rambler' from Manchester way and did get my pleasures the hard moorland way.

More on our actual 'ladies' meet in the meet report but I got my wife out on her first such meet as it was back where we walked fairly regularly when we first met.

I am afraid the moors are in a bad way. When the National Trust took over the management of Kinder 25 years ago it was already struggling from overgrazing and over walking not to mention the wildfires and pollution from Sheffield and Manchester. The Dark Peak is home to internationally important peat bogs, which can act as vital carbon stores for the UK. The changing nature of our climate, leading to increased occurrence of fires and extremely heavy rainfall, has also exacerbated the problems.

The Trust has been working to stabilise the quality of the peat bogs and try to halt the loss of this important natural resource. To celebrate this anniversary they arranged a mass planting of 150,000 cotton grass plants. Fortunately they chose the week after our meet to descend on the area.

This is part of an ongoing programme using volunteers to plant locally collected seeds of bilberry, cloudberry and other moorland plants.

The whole area is being slowly restored but along the way it is being disfigured. Fenced off areas and seas of carpet are amongst the eyesores to be found. Parts of Bleaklow have been covered with bio-degradable carpet which allows seedlings to grow through but holds the surface together and they are moving on to tackle Black Hill. Fences which are going up all over the place are not to keep us out but are sheep defences.

The issue more important than almost any other is the avoidance of wildfires as our climate warms up. We can all play our part here.

**BMC MEMBERSHIP** - The changing structure of the BMC is now becoming clearer and the new Memorandum and Articles of Association make interesting reading. There are a number of changes which were not popular in a number of quarters and many senior clubs have concerns. The BMC was originally set up by the clubs as an umbrella organisation to co-ordinate their activities and allow them to make representations with one voice and therefore more clout. Following the recent major changes the Clubs are no longer members of the BMC and have no powers to influence that organisation other than by representations or the actions of the Clubs' individual members.

For the benefit of those who may not have had access to BMC paperwork the following is the new membership structure.

## Classes of Membership

The Membership of the BMC shall consist of Individual Members, Club Members and Associate Members.

### 5.1. Individual Members

5.1.1. any persons of any nationality with an interest in Mountaineering shall be eligible to be an Individual Member of the BMC on payment of the appropriate membership fee.

5.1.2. the BMC may on recommendation of the National Council invite persons to become Honorary Members of the BMC and Honorary Members shall not be liable to pay a membership fee but shall be entitled to all the privileges and services provided to other Individual Members.

5.1.3. The National Council may invite persons to become Patrons of the BMC and Patrons shall not be liable to pay a membership fee but shall be entitled to all the privileges and services provided to other Individual Members.

5.1.4. Any Club Member shall be entitled to be upgraded to an Individual Member on payment of the appropriate upgrade fee and shall be entitled to all the privileges and services provided to other Individual Members.

### 5.2. Club Members

5.2.1. All those members of an Affiliated Club listed in the returns made by that Affiliated Club to the BMC shall become Club Members on payment by the Affiliated Club to the BMC of the appropriate membership fee.

5.2.2. Such Club Members shall be entitled to be upgraded to Individual Members on payment of the appropriate upgrade fee and shall be entitled to all the privileges and services provided to other Individual Members.

### 5.3. Associate Members

5.3.1. Any company, organisation, club, association or business wishing to be affiliated to the BMC but not being eligible to become an Affiliated Club shall be entitled to apply to be an Associate Member on complying with such requirements as are from time to time specified by the National Council in Regulations appertaining thereto and payment of the appropriate membership fee but shall not be entitled to the privileges and services available to Voting Members save any that are from time to time specified by the National Council in Regulations appertaining thereto.

5.3.2. Any partnership or unincorporated association wishing to apply to be an Associate Member shall nominate a member of that partnership or unincorporated association to make application to the BMC on behalf of that partnership or unincorporated association and on acceptance that person shall be designated an Associate Member and shall thereupon be entitled to exercise all the rights of membership of the BMC on behalf of that partnership or unincorporated association until such time as that person shall be replaced by a new representative nominated by that partnership or unincorporated association to be Associate Member in his place and the BMC shall accept as valid and binding evidence of such nomination a letter signed by any two partners of that partnership or by the president or chairman of that unincorporated association and countersigned by the secretary of that unincorporated association

## 6. Affiliated Clubs

6.1. A club or other association (hereinafter referred to as 'club') shall be eligible to affiliate to the BMC as an Affiliated Club if;

6.1.1. its principal object is Mountaineering and

6.1.2. its headquarters are in Great Britain and

6.1.3. it is controlled by its own members

or in the opinion of the National Council its affiliation would be in the best interests of the BMC notwithstanding that it fails to meet one or more of the foregoing criteria.

6.2. An Affiliated Club shall file with the BMC returns stating the number of members of the Affiliated Club resident in the United Kingdom (and shall be entitled to include members resident elsewhere), their names and addresses and such other information as the BMC may from time to time require and at such times and for such periods as the BMC may from time to time require and shall pay the appropriate membership fee on behalf of the members of that club included in such return whereupon those members shall be admitted as Club Members of the BMC entitled to the privileges and services from time to time provided to Club Members.



## DOWN BY THE SEASIDE

It was encouraging to hear recently that Natural England (the independent body set up to advise the government) is finally recommending the establishment of a corridor along the entire length of England's coast with a legal right to roam.

The proposed corridor will be flexible and unmapped so that it can take coastal erosion into account. It will also look to increase bio-diversity and to protect landscapes within it.

This is good news but there is some way to ensure these proposals are implemented and in itself it is a much less ambitious project than I had been campaigning for. It is seemingly to be a fairly narrow corridor where I had advocated a much wider one which would have made it easier to exclude pockets where wildlife needed protection. I had also advocated that the marine environment out to the 12 mile limit should be included to afford it some protected status.

There will be heavy opposition to the present suggestions as not surprisingly, the government seems unlikely to put money on the table to compensate landowners.

## LOW HALL GARTH LOG BOOK

I am sure that all users of Low Hall Garth know it; the book, in which hut users recorded their activities. It was kept in the wall recess on the right of the fireplace. I first saw it in 1961. Crosby Fox, our member who sadly was killed in the Himalaya in 1957, presented the book to the YRC in 1953. He made the book from folded sheets of ordinary lined writing paper of foolscap size, each section stitched in place and bound into a board case covered with soft leather that had the YRC emblem tooled in it. Crosby appears to have made the entire book. I conjecture that he made it while at sea on one of his salvage trips. The front sheet is signed by Jack Hilton, the President at that time.

At a committee meeting in January 2006, LHG Warden Iain Gilmour produced the book he had removed from LHG for safe keeping; it was extremely dilapidated and was being abused. Over the years I have written accounts of walks in the book and had a strong feeling that it should be

repaired and kept in a safe place. Therefore I volunteered to tidy it up.

Since then on a number of occasions I have wished that I had never started but the feeling has always passed by the next morning. The paper sheets are of poor quality not very strong, and not only had the edges curled but pieces were missing. From the early sections that had been used frequently, some sheets had the entire long edge and the top and bottom edges torn away. In some places the binding stitching had cut through the paper completely resulting in loose sheets. In other sections only part way along the length was cut through, but every sheet in such a section was thus damaged. The damage was compounded by sticky tape having been used to hold the torn sheets together. Several sheets had holes burnt in them by a candle; these have been left, as they are beyond repair.

For some time I contemplated the book assessing how badly each of the 500 or so pages was damaged and what could be done. For the most part I was able to remove the adhesive tape from the pages, by careful peeling and the use of a sharp knife, (I felt like a picture restorer). One or two pages were too delicate for that and so the tape had to be left in position. Where the candle had burnt the book, someone had glazed the holes with transparent document repair tape; that is still there.

To use new paper to repair the old would have made things worse, ('new wine in old bottles') as new paper would have been too strong and the wrong colour. Anyway, that was not possible, as new lined paper of a similar size is unobtainable. Modern A4 paper is not long enough and so could not be used to replace the long edges, even if the pitch of the lines were the same. At the end of the book there were several sections of old paper unwritten on, so I decided to remove some of those and use them to repair the damaged ones.

Now the question became how should I repair the folded sheets where the stitching had cut through? Reluctantly, after pondering this problem for a day or two I decided that the only solution, which seemed drastic, was to take the book apart.

By gently easing the binding strips out of the case I was able to cut the stitching that held each of

the sections, made of six folded sheets, to the binding strips. My boats were burnt!

At this point I was reminded of the grandfather clock. My mother's clock refused to go and I decided to give it a clean. After removing the hands and face from the mechanism I laid the works on the backplate and tickled around the spindles and gear trains with WD40 and a toothbrush. But then I eased up the frontplate to reach a part and the whole of the clock mechanism fell out. Spindles, gear wheels, governors, warning arms, bell hammer, the lot, all fell sideways around the backplate. The only thing to do was to get on and clean everything properly and repair where necessary. The clock had not struck for about fifty years from the time it struck 130 at midnight, alarming the whole household. The outcome was that several months later the clock was clean, and repaired with new parts I had made to replace broken ones, the weights were hung on nylon rather than catgut, the clock kept good time again and struck normally. I am hoping for a similar success with the log book.

As I scraped, peeled and glued the unstitched sheets it came to me that really each sheet should be scanned into the computer. This was the only time it could be done, once the book was stitched together again and in its binding it would be impossible to access the sheets. I resisted for sometime as the thought of scanning nearly 400 sides of paper twice was daunting, but eventually my liking for doing a job properly won and as I finished repairing a section (24 sides) it was scanned into the computer. Because the paper used was longer than A4 it was necessary to scan each sheet twice. The top of each sheet was scanned, and then the bottom, with an overlap in the middle, to help the reader with continuity.

The book indicates changes through 50 years of the YRC. It begins in 1953 with young members keen on climbing briefly recording their activities. It is fascinating to picture members that I have known as people older than me, as vigorous young men. After quite a short number of years things slow down as those first members move away changing jobs and getting married. Climbers still used the hut but often from other clubs, not the YRC. Group weekends mainly for walking appear. Some groups are recorded visiting year after year at around the same date. Some family groups can be traced over thirty to forty years, granddad

coming first as a youngish man through to a granddaughter celebrating her 21st birthday. The low point of entries comes from youth organisations, some members of these could barely write, abused the book by scribbling inane comments, and in extreme cases drawing cartoon figures. It is enlightening to read what a high proportion of use has been by other groups or clubs rather than by our own members.

Going back to the entries in the book, much of it is boring drivel, but even drivel is a record of the times. The drivel is interspersed by some first rate entries. Surprisingly, Erik T. W. Addyman was there in 1962 seeking the whereabouts of the Wasdale Climbing Book and the Pinnacle Record Book and metal case. (Were they found?). There is David Smith's account of his round of the 3000 footers in 1955. I have found entries by well-known members of the YRC who came either with a private group or supervising a school party many years before they applied for membership. Some of these, I had mistakenly thought, had had their first contact with the Club only recently.

All of the pages have now been repaired, refolded in sections and pressed together in a press of my own design composed of two boards operated by four 6 mm bolts and nuts, one at each corner.

Scanning is completed, (I thought I would never get there!). Now I enter a new phase, stitching the sections to the binding strips. I have linen thread ready and before cutting the stitching I recorded the complicated stitching pattern by making a mock-up with folded newspaper. A frame needs to be made to hold the sections during stitching. I hope my work will be thought to be worthwhile. I do.

Before the book refurbishment is completed the scanned pages will be in the computer in the library at Lowstern. I hope that the computer will be used to read the records rather than the book, as even after my best efforts it is still very fragile. Text that is illegible on the scanned sheets can be checked in the book, if that is essential. But please handle with care, a year of spare time and effort has gone into this.

It cannot be done again.

Jeff Hooper

# WHAT A COLOURFUL WORLD!

## ALPS MEET 2006 Mick Borroff

### THE FAUNA,

The mountainous area around the Gran Paradiso used to be the exclusive hunting preserve of the King, where ibex and chamois were the principle quarry. Since Vittorio Emanuele II renounced his hunting rights in 1922 creating Italy's first National Park, the protected game has flourished and the area continues to hold large stocks.

The ibex, called the Stambecco locally, were frequently seen by those ascending above the summer grazing areas onto the rocky slopes around the 3000m mark.

I saw ibex just below the summit of Monte Emilius, on both sides of the Colle dell'Arolla and at the summit of Monte Creyaz, where Dave got his first close-up view.

Most of the ibex in groups were either young males or small herds of females with their young.

The solitary mature males, like the one I photographed high in the Vallon di Bardonney, sported superb horns and were in the process of moulting their winter coats.

The chamois were more widely distributed, with a large herd of females and their kids (if that is the correct collective noun) spotted on Monte Erban. However the male I photographed was found in the valley bottom, just above Valnontey and was grazing quite unconcerned by the camera's flash. Another was observed being photographed by passing motorists at the side of the access road up from Cogne.

Having had a nocturnal visit to my tent by a fox who dragged a rubbish bag from under my flysheet, I was not surprised to see a vixen above Valnontey collecting scraps of bread before trotting away to her den underneath a large boulder.

Marmots were frequently heard whistling to one another and sometimes seen, but I failed to get any photographs of them this time.

### BUTTERFLIES

Having grown up as a boy in the chalk grasslands of the North Downs in Surrey, butterflies have always been a interest, although this has changed from chasing them with a net to inspect them at close quarters to using a camera. The Alps in the Gran Paradiso continue to be a virtually unspoilt habitat for them with almost unchanging agricultural practices with respect to the maintenance of summer grazing pastures, which have kept the full range of flora on which their caterpillars depend on for food and the nectar rich flowers that sustain the adults while looking for a mate.

Butterflies and moths were seen everywhere, from down in the valleys to the thermal and wind assisted presence on the summits themselves. There were plenty of species familiar to the lepidopterist in the UK, such as Painted Ladies, Peacocks, Small Tortoiseshells, Large Skippers and Grizzled Skippers. Fritillaries were abundant with Dark Green, High Brown, Silver Washed, Pearl-bordered, Small Pearl-bordered, and the smaller Heath fritillaries were all seen. Various blues, Green-veined Whites, Marbled Whites, Graylings, Meadow Browns and Mountain Ringlets were also plentiful. I also saw a few mountain species not to be found in the UK: Apollos were the largest butterflies to be seen, Mountain Clouded Yellows, Large Coppers and various *Erebia* species were seen.

A solitary Humming-bird Hawk-moth was seen, but Six-spot Burnet moths were exceptionally common along with Silver Y moths and several other smaller species currently unidentified.

### SNAKES

While descending the grassy slopes above Pila, Dave spotted a snake about 18 inches long weaving through the vegetation, which I photographed. This later turned out to be a poisonous Asp Viper (*Vipera Aspis*), beautifully marked with a black-on-grey chequered pattern down its back. All black versions are apparently quite common too.



Large Copper



Marbled White



Mountain Apollo



Ibex



Vixen



Chamois

Winter sunset over  
Seathwaite Tarn

Photo  
Mick Borroff



Dawn over  
Guitar Lake,  
High Sierra Trek  
2006

Photo  
Alan Kay



**FLORA OF LADAKH**



# MEETS REPORT

## DINNER MEET - Lowstern & Whoop Hall

November 17<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> 2006

Lowstern has proved to be a very practical venue for many members over the dinner weekend. It was virtually full house on the Saturday. Friday's weather was appalling, not a good start to the celebration.

The Annual general meeting took its usual form at Whoop Hall where 56 members were in attendance. Various secretaries' reports that had been posted to members were commented upon and officials and committee were duly elected. The President, Ken Aldred, proposed that we discuss the future of the Club, but not to make any proposals for acceptance by the AGM. A quite lively discussion followed, several contrary points of view were put forward. The President suggested that over the next twelve months this topic should be aired on meets so that at the 2007 AGM perhaps significant decisions can be considered.

It was interesting to have an Everest Summiteer as our Chief Guest; particularly that he was a member of our kindred club the Wayfarers. Not only had he climbed Everest twice, in fact has other 8000 metre summits to his credit in the area, and he is a young man to boot with a bright future. Sadly the official representative of the Wayfarers had to cry off due to a sudden illness. Don Lee represented the Fell & Rock and Jane Renton represented our new kindred club from Wolverhampton.

The After Dinner walk on Sunday was carefully planned by Richard Kirby to help save the planet in avoiding the use of cars; in fact we were only on the busy A65 for a few yards. Whoop Hall was left by a SE field path heading for Overtown, here we followed the Leck Beck upstream for three miles to Easedale Kirk. Then the route took a northerly track leading to Bullpot Farm. A short secondary road and a path lead us to Brownthwaite Pike and onwards on another short bit of road and a track to Blindloss Farm and the hotel. The weather was very kind to us and an enjoyable walk was the result.

Potholes were bottomed both on Saturday and Sunday.

A wet Long Churn saw Michael Smith, Duncan and prospective member Chris Fitzhugh as far as Greasy Slab, two returning via Cheesepress. It was reported to be tighter than it used to be! A ladder problem resulted in the last man having a problem getting a foot on the rungs. It all adds to the fun. Hot showers at Lowstern were greatly enjoyed.

They must have enjoyed Saturday to risk another wetting as they were guided through the celebrated Easgill system, from Lancaster Pot to County Pot by Tim & Richard Josephy and Ged. Eddie joined Michael and Chris, but Duncan had to return to the Kendal Film Festival where he achieved second prize for his film, 'Right of Way', which starred John Lovett and Albert Chapman. The through trip took in Montague East Passage and Corne's Cavern. Also Scylla and Charybdis that they treated with respect it deserves, then, rounding a boulder they found themselves back in Charybdis again. Painter's Pallet was reported to be looking very colourful.

The general consensus was that the weekend had been its usual success where old friendships were built upon and new friendships established. After such a brilliant summer we could not complain if the sun failed to shine brightly.

F. David Smith

## CHRISTMAS MEET, LOWSTERN, 8-10<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2006

A total of 37 attended the meet, with 27 arriving on the Friday. There were doubtless exploits of one sort or another on Friday afternoon, but only one was brought to the attention of the writer of this report—an ascent of Pen-y-Ghent(PD). Richard Kirby provided us with an excellent evening meal, after which we enjoyed slides of Norway(thanks to MB)

Saturday dawned fine, and fine it remained, and although some cloud settled on the upper slopes of both Whernside and Ingleborough, with a bit of sleet/snow on both, for those who didn't go high enough(identification withheld)it was a sunny day throughout.

A number of early risers (numbers varied depending on the source of info) left by car for Ribbleshead at what seemed like first light, and did what was described as "two & a half peaks", going up Whernside by the northern route over Blea

Moor, returning to the Hill Inn, and then up Ingleborough via Mere Ghyll returning to the cars via Simon Fell and Park Hill - with the obligatory visit to the Station Hotel to round off the day. A no less distinguished party, including the President, walked from Lowstern via Gaping Ghyll over Ingleborough, across to Horton, via Sulber Nick, returning over Moughton to Crummack Dale and back to Clapham. Many variations of these walks were done by others, which, for two at least, included revisiting the Norber rock formations.

Another duo (IC/RC) were in Dentdale, going over Great Coum and Crag Hill. No reports of activities underground were noted, although one member reported that conditions at Ewood Park were as wet as any pothole, which didn't turn out to be much of an afternoon for Blackburn Rovers fans. In the evening there were two slide shows of the High Sierras (Iain Gilmour & a.n.o), followed by a fascinating DVD on exploration, activities and the terrain in Mongolia (Michael Parkinson & Guest).

The Christmas dinner was superb and our thanks to the meet Leader, and others who helped out in the kitchen; not forgetting the "clearers up".

Sunday didn't start too badly, but was soon in the bad category, and very wet indeed. As usual some members left right after breakfast, others late morning and others even later. Two (Alan Linford and Paul Dover) headed for the climbing wall at Ingleton, Robert Crowther went diving, with some opting for activities underground. Mike Smith and Chris Fitzhugh walked up to the Allotment and went down Long Kin East. The walk through the cave presented no difficulties and on getting to the pot the first two cascade pitches were descended in very wet conditions. This was as far as could be gone under the prevailing circumstances, and they duly returned, making their way back via Gaping Ghyll, and passing Ingleborough Cave, open to the public with Santa and trappings, which had during the day attracted a steady flow of visitors, not least among them Ged Campion and his family. Thumbs up from the children!

Our thanks to Ken Aldred for an excellent meet, which incidentally was enlivened by two near incidents, the first the result of an oven gas tap being left open, which those in the kitchen didn't smell, but someone coming in from outside thankfully did, and a little later in the weekend, a

smouldering tea-towel at the bottom of the rubbish bin (one way of testing smoke alarms!)

Those attending the meet were:-

Mike Godden, Ken Aldred, Mike Smith, Chris Fitzhugh (guest), Rob Ibberson, John Jenkin, John Schofield, Paul Dover, Mick Borroff, Derek Collins, Iain Gilmour, John Lovett, Derek Smithson, David Hick, Arthur Salmon, Frank Wilkinson, Tony Smythe, Ged Campion, Robert Crowther, Chris Renton, Alister Renton, John Hemingway, Alan Linford, Ian Laing, David Smith, Derek Bush, Richard Kirby, Ian Crowther, George Spencely, Harvey Lomas, David Handley, Albert Chapman, John Brown, Gordon Humphries, Howard Humphries, Michael Parkinson and a guest (Bill?)

Ian Laing

## ALMOND LODGE GLENRIDDING 12th & 13th January 2007

The venue for this meet was originally intended to be held at the Patterdale Youth Hostel, but numbers did not justify what would have been an expensive "gourmet" weekend and it was switched to the Almond Lodge, located at the top of Greenside Road, running parallel to Greenside Beck, a very well-appointed building close to the Hellvellyn Youth Hostel.

An HM Coastguard van parked at the end of the road was perhaps indicative of the sort of weather to be expected; early arrivals for this open meet discovered that there was a power cut, but fortunately the electricity supply was restored just after darkness fell although the reason for the temporary failure was not ascertained. The weather forecast for the weekend was atrocious, but this did not deter the two ladies, sixteen members and one guest who attended. Several members used the kitchen facilities to cook an evening meal, but the majority drove down to the Travellers' Rest at Glenridding for an excellent bar meal. Members gave their accounts of the driving difficulties on the flooded and wind-swept roads, especially on the Kirkstone Pass, but these conditions were as nothing compared with what was to come on Saturday and Sunday.

We were all fortified by an excellent breakfast prepared by Andrew Duxbury before departing to do battle with the extreme elements. David Hick and Mike Borroff chose to head off to Hellvellyn

via Striding Edge, proceeding thence to Whiteside and Raise, presumably then to Nick Head, and thereafter they walked the Glencoyne Horseshoe High Traverse back to Almond Lodge. I believe they were the only members who fully achieved their objective that day, most other members being beaten back by the appalling weather. However, Derek Smithson, Mike and Helen Smith ascended to Boredale House on the South side of Ullswater, and walked down the Boardale valley to Sandwich, where they sheltered at lunchtime on the upper floor of a barn before returning to Glenridding by the Ullswater shore path. By choosing this route they avoided the worst of the gale force winds and driving rain. Boredale House was also attacked by the "Dover" trio, who continued thence to Angle Tarn with a view to walking over to little-visited Hayes Water. However, like other members on the meet, they were defeated by gale force winds and heavy rain, but I am informed they did, perhaps surprisingly, have a view of Brother's Water from Angle Tarn. Even the hardy president and Marcia were driven back by appalling weather. They battled up the valley past disused mine workings to Brown Cove, previously unknown to the writer, but adjacent to better known Keppel Cove, and north-west of Catstye Cam. There, according to the two and a half inch map, the path ends in a welter of boulders, which apparently persuaded our president to retreat from this "Godden" forsaken territory and seek an alternative route to Sticks Pass, and thence to the comfort of Almond Lodge.

Rob Ibberson, Derek Collins and Alan Kay were similarly disposed to pit their endurance against the ridge from Sticks Pass to Raise, then, in accordance with their report, "towards" Hellvellyn, and the shortest way back to base. Individual walks were made by our meet organiser, who walked down to Glenridding to replenish and supplement supplies; Harvey Lomas, who said he was "itinerant"; and late arrival Albert Chapman, who took a solo stroll up the valley to what he described as a tarn and mine workings.

That then leaves three aged members, Alan Brown, David Armstrong and John Sterland. With their "vast" experience they decided that to attempt Hellvellyn and adjacent areas would be somewhat foolhardy and counter-productive for members approaching their sell-by date, and opted for a more gentle walk along the Ullswater shore path, with the intention of visiting St Peter's and

St Martin's churches in Martindale. A mid morning change of plans resulted in all three agreeing to walk back to Glenridding, and then to proceed by car to Howtown and Martindale to explore those ecclesiastical buildings. There is a modern stained glass window in St Peter's church, donated by a local landowner to commemorate the death of his son on, I believe, HMS *Glorious* during the 1939-45 war. It is well worth inspection, but unfortunately the church was closed. However, they had better luck at St Martins church, further up the valley. This church has stood on this site for more than 700 years, and the pews, adapted from old pew boxes, are arranged lengthwise. I believe this is a unique arrangement, but if any member knows otherwise I would be pleased to hear from him.

The return journey was not without incident. The high winds had whipped up huge waves on Ullswater, which encroached on the road in many places, but they gathered strength and height towards the bottom of the lake at Pooley Bridge, and on one corner a wave came over the bonnet of the car, which prompted Alan to warn me to be careful not to "broach to". He then explained the dynamic reasons for the occurrence of this phenomenon in certain circumstances with a following wind. We survived the danger, and were able to join other members who had sought shelter and sustenance in the Travellers' Rest at Glenridding. Then we all gathered at Almond Lodge for a most excellent five course meal prepared by Andrew Duxbury, who says he has much practice at home. Thank you very much, Andrew, for such a delicious repast.

I have not had a report from all members on their Sunday outings, but some people, being gluttons for windy punishment, returned to the fray next day. Mike Borroff, in particular repeated his Hellvellyn ascent, accompanied this time by the Dover contingent.

Smith, Smith, Kay and Ibberson departed from the hut for a 9 am start, and made their way up to Red Tarn, where they decided to avoid Striding Edge in favour of Swirral Edge. Finding shelter from the west wind in the east-facing corrie, they were reluctant to regain the ridge, especially since the rocks were covered in old and new snow. Instead they continued on the high level traverse, kicking steps in good old snow, to arrive on the windy plateau about 30 metres north of the trig point. They made haste to the summit shelter for coffee



and cake, but cooling quickly, they descended via Lower Man and Whiteside to Glenridding Common. This was not easily achieved as the wind gusted 90-100 mph. Progress off Lower Man was retarded by staggering and stumbling across the uneven surface between sideways gusts. Some were blown over, and one hat was torn from under an anorak hood and deposited in Brown Cove. The hut was regained about 1 pm. They encountered few others during the day, but they declared it a success.

Derek Smithson struggled against the wind to just before Grisedale Tarn, but, as he says, he expected the wind would strike him down if he reached the top. He recalls that years ago he used to play on the snow in the gullies towards the top of the east face of Hellvellyn. John Sterland returned to Townend Farmhouse near Newby Bridge, where the weather was not so severe, and walked up to what he is pleased to call "Sterland's Seat" (not otherwise named on the O.S. map) via Boretree Tarn and High Dam.

John Sterland

#### Attending

Mike Godden - President , Marcia Godden  
 Dennis Armstrong, Mike Borroff, Alan Brown  
 Albert Chapman, Paul Dover, Philip Dover (Guest)  
 Richard Dover, Andrew Duxbury, David Hick  
 Rob Ibberson, Alan Kay, Harvey Lomas  
 Mike Smith, Helen Smith, Derek Smithson  
 John Sterland, Derek Collins - Day visitor

### OCHILS MC HUT CRIANLARICH

Feb 8th - 11th

Those who travelled up early on Thursday were rewarded with a beautiful day and several parties were lucky enough to get a short day out. By the evening 21 members were crowded into the hut, proving the continuing popularity of this meet.

Friday dawned not too bad, overcast with a scattered cloudbase around 3000ft and everyone was out early. The President, with a previous holder of that office, climbed An Chasteil; indeed, apart from solitary excursions, there were only two parties that didn't contain past presidents and they both had past vice presidents. Perhaps it's time we had a cull.

For those who like to know these things, a satisfactory number of Munros were climbed as follows:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Mike Godden, Derek Smithson.                        | An Chasteil                                       |
| Frank Wilkinson, Arthur Salmon.                     | Ben More  |
| Iain Gilmour, PeterGreen, Rob Ibberson.             |   |
|   | White Corries, Meall a' Bhuiride                  |
| Derek Bush, Albert Chapman, Barrie Wood,            |   |
|   | An Chasteil, Beinn A'Chroin                       |
| Adrian Dixon, John Brown, Mick Borroff, David Hick. | Ben More, Stobinnean                              |
| Adrian Bridge, Tim Josephy.                         |   |
|   | Beinn Dorain, Beinn an Dothaidh, Beinn Achaladair |
| Dennis Armstrong, David Smith, David Martindale     |   |
|   | West Highland Way                                 |
| Harvey Lomas.                                       | Ben Narnain                                       |
| Ian Crowther, Chris Hilton.                         | Glen Dochart                                      |

Everyone enjoyed a good day although it cannot be said that conditions were ideal. There were just a few inches of soft snow over frozen ground with a few patches of hard snow higher up. Hardly a classic Scottish winter. By mid afternoon the wind had picked up to gale force on the tops and by dusk the cloud had lowered in light snow.

Chris Hilton and his aides provided an excellent meal in the evening, during the course of which the conversation ranged far and wide. Sadly old age (or possibly the grape) prevents me from remembering the details, but one can be sure that whatever the subject, there is a YRC member who is prepared to expound at length, regardless of whether he actually knows anything about it at all.

Saturday dawned with violent winds, low cloud, sleet and snow. A truly horrible day. Most people sensibly kept to the valleys and the West Highland way was much visited. One party attempted Beinn Chabhar but turned back halfway when they realised they were not enjoying themselves at all. Honour was partially regained by David Large and Trevor Drage, who battled on to the top of Cruach Ardrain. In their own words "it was grim". By mid afternoon, furtive groups could be seen sidling into the pubs to watch the rugby. It is very good of the 6 nations organisers to plan a weekend of rugby to coincide with our meet.

Another fine meal and convivial company made up somewhat for the day, but when Sunday dawned not much better than the day before, most people got ready to depart for the south. I am not sure what deeds were done, but Adrian Bridge and Tim

Josephy went to the superb climbing wall in Glasgow. They managed to pull their arms out of their sockets very satisfactorily and the car wasn't vandalised so it was a good day.

Because of the weather, this was not one of the best Scottish meets - perhaps we should think of moving it to March, when conditions these days seem to be more reliable. However, Chris Hilton made up for everything with his excellent catering and organisation. He may well find he has got a job for life.

Mike Godden  
Dennis Armstrong  
Adrian Bridge  
Mick Borroff  
John Brown  
Derek Bush  
Albert Chapman  
Ian Crowther  
Adrian Dixon  
Trevor Drage  
Iain Gilmour  
Peter Green  
David Hick  
Chris Hilton  
Rob Ibberson  
Tim Josephy  
David Large  
Harvey Lomas  
David Martindale  
Arthur Salmon  
David Smith  
Derek Smithson  
Frank wilkinson  
Barrie Wood

## LADS & DADS REVISITED

### February 16 - 18

Lads and Dads meets were a regular YRC feature and it is not clear why they disappeared from the meet programme. Legislation had not appeared, perhaps the children and the dads had matured and the club did not have a natural succession. Whatever the reason more indoor facilities were now available countrywide offering flexibility of timing, venue and continuation of interest rather than a on-off in a meet programme.

I have been impressed by the dedication and skills of many youngsters participating in the British Regional Youth Climbing Series (BRYCS), a starter

to selection for the British Climbing Team. BRYCS is sponsored by the British and Scottish Mountaineering Councils but I am not aware of any interest shown by climbing clubs. In the BRYCS each sex has 3 categories based on age 7-9, 10-12 and 13-15.

It is recognised that indoor wall climbing is a different and separate sport to rock climbing and maybe, but not with any certainty, will participants transfer to traditional rock climbing. Except of course when the YRC are involved. The BMC harbour thoughts that the sport will become an Olympic event in 2016.

I was aware of recent legislation concerning young persons and reasoned that providing parents or guardians were present, accepting a 'revisit' would involve lads and lasses, the requirements were manageable particularly with the help offered. I mentioned this at the AGM and this generated sufficient interest to arrange a mid week get together at the February half term. The arrangement nearly fell apart. Mid week was not possible due to different half terms across the country and I was lucky to secure Lowstern for the weekend between the half terms. Something to consider should the committee wish to include similar meets in the meet programme. To offset this contact Paul Dover who is collating school holiday dates, hopefully future meets can include everybody who wishes to be involved.

9 adults (including a PM) and 8 children had an excellent weekend, with requests to repeat. At the last minute 4 adults and 4 (disappointed) children were unable to attend, had illness not kept them away this would have been a very well attended meet. Another 3 children had priority academic activities. Mike and Marcia Godden with Jahel, Max and Jack, Paul Dover with Billy 8, Rob Ibberson, Andy and Emma Syme with Alexander 12 and Isabelle 11, Alan Linford with Alex 12 and Joe 11, Alister and Jane Renton, and Arthur Salmom made up the meet. Some arrived in the first week and although with mixed weather topped out the 3 peaks and fitted in some scrambling. Friday evening knots and belaying, up and down the stairs, were enthusiastically pursued and on Saturday put into practice for 3 hours on the Ingleton Rock wall. This is an excellent venue, all the children found their own level of severity, none were bored, two led their first route clipping in and onto quickstarts and removing them on the way down. Vital to the climbing was the roping up of the routes and ready

availability of extra belayers, knot and harness checkers provided by Alister, Jane and Arthur.

Non climbing parents fulfilled a vital role providing sustenance, toilet patrol and keeper of valuables. By 2pm the sun was out and a return to the hut for rope ladder work and fun on a blinding wire.

Not a sound over night! Sunday, lovely day and all up to the Norber Erratics for bouldering.

Communal meal provided by Rob and Arthur and it seemed that the natural affinity of the YRC as they support each other carried over to the children, who apart from the odd threat on Friday night got on well with the adults.

The owners of the Ingleton rock wall, recognising their responsibilities, required parents and guardians to sign declarations that they were allowed to check harnesses and knots, unavoidable contact with the children.

Thanks to Wally of Rock Antics, Newton Aycliffe for help with climbing gear.

Alan Linford.

#### TALYBRIACH, DEINIOLEN -NORTH WALES Joint Meet / Wolverhampton Mountaineering Club 9-11 March 2007

We all passed Tim's initiative test. We found the WMC cottage which is hidden within a labyrinth of minor roads - eventually. A welcome sight for successful navigators: outside the entrance stood a nine gallon barrel of beer. By the time the first host WMC members arrived the huge fireplace sported a very smoky fire. "You must close the kitchen door", they said. Voila, no smoke.

Next morning the YRC members breakfasted and departed in the most part before the WMC members surfaced.

Ian Crowther, making use of his mountain bike, was wary of the North Wales Police's strict attitude to speeding, so reportedly took it steady going uphill. Others took a car to Tryfan and walked back via Tryfan Ridge and Bristley Ridge. Tim and Adrian went to the coast at Tremadog and enjoyed three and a half routes although Tremadog did not live up to its usual weather-dodging reputation. Eric's Café did.

The long distance award must go to Richard and Nick who drove to Capel Curig and crossed Crimpian, Craig Wen, Creigiau Gleision, Llyn Cowlyd, Llyn Eigiau, Craig Eigiau and Bwlch y Tri Marchog. Fourteen miles in all, further than they had intended. (Not returning before dinner usually invokes a jocular toast to absent friends but we found Tim's concern for his brother quite touching. Then we remembered that Richard was using Tim's car.)

The Presidential party walked up to the reservoir and then down to the museum in Llanberis but it was closed until Easter.

The WMC have seen it all before, including the gales and horizontal rain. They stayed in the local mountains and returned to build a fire in the giant hearth which put our previous night's efforts to shame.

Beer at £1.00 per pint. 9 gallons x 8 = 72 pints. £45.00 in the bowl. 27 pints remaining. Perhaps with a bottle of wine with our meal we CAN make the beer last out.

After the rough weather, the chilli con carne was soon warming us all through. The catering was up to Tim's usual high standards.

After a blustery wet night, Sunday morning dawned wet and windy and most people returned home without getting their boots wet.

Many thanks to Tim. Thanks also to the WMC for the use of their wonderful cottage and their excellent company. We look forward to many more successful meets with our newest kindred club.

#### Attending

##### WMC

Gail Faulkner  
Alan Fletcher  
Rich Sealey  
Gary Slater  
Nikki Slater  
Dave Wilkinson

##### YRC

Mick Borroff  
Adrian Bridge  
Ian Crowther  
David Hick  
Mike Godden  
John Jenkins  
Tim Josephy  
Richard Josephy  
Harvey Lomas  
Michael Smith  
John Schofield  
Nick Welch

LANGDALE 30 March to 1 April 2007.

Originally scheduled for Low Hall Garth we are indebted to our friends the Wayfarers for at short notice the use of the Robertson Lamb Hut for this meet. By coincidence the Wayfarers were at Lowstern for this weekend.

Friday provided an opportunity for 2 ex Presidents (having bagged a bottom bunk) to walk round to LHG to view the excellent work done by Iain Gilmour and his team. First impressions were, whatever it costs it is worth it! The raised and insulated ceiling in the bunkroom will make access to the top bunks possible even reasonably elegant for most hut users. The kitchen ceiling is sound-proofed and insulated making life more tenable for all occupants. The toilet area will be really smart but the whole is not going to detract from the uniqueness of LHG as a traditional climbing hut.

Chris Renton called with a replacement for the car he wore out going up and down to LHG. Said to have done 300 or was it 400,000 miles.

Saturday, a fine day but bitterly cold in the fresh easterly wind. Scramble routes on Pavey Ark, Harrisons and Bowfell the most adventurous tour but all members put in a full day to return to a feast provided by John Jenkin. A steep learning curve for John who had to cope with the vagaries of two new ovens and accommodated two members of the Wayfarers who arrived expecting a quiet weekend to find us in residence. All was well.

Absent Friends brought more than a few moments of reflection as Albert Chapman brought the news that at lunchtime today Helen Handley had lost her battle with cancer.

Sunday. It seemed the whole meet, bar two, travelled to LHG to discuss decorations and furnishings, the consensus of opinion, if there was one, is unreported. If you do hear a result please remember it was April the First. One member did not make the meeting spending most of the day trying to recover his ignition key from inside his locked Volvo, without having to ring his wife. Two having completed business in Patterdale had a scenic walk up Grisedale accompanied by the rat-a tat of woodpeckers.

WAL

Attendance.

The President, Mike Godden.

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Mick Borroff    | Richard Kirby   |
| Derek Bush      | Alan Linford    |
| Albert Chapman  | John Lovett     |
| Ian Crowther    | John Schofield  |
| Roger Dix       | Chris Renton    |
| Graham Dootson. | Harry Robinson  |
| David Hick      | David Smith     |
| John Jenkin.    | Derek Smithson. |

### **FOR THE RECORD**

Harry Spilsbury Memorial Meets.

Joint meets at the Robertson Lamb Hut.

During the usual chat at the 2006 meet it was thought that the meet was the 52<sup>nd</sup> time we had met at RLH. This fact was considered important enough to be included in the meet report but was disputed and had to be removed. A scramble to the Journals, meet reports and meet cards has produced information and general agreement that the 2006 meet was the 59<sup>th</sup> Joint meet.

Some record!

More interesting, the 2007 meet at RLH will be the 60<sup>th</sup> and an opportunity for a celebration\*.

David Smith (YRC) has attended 51 consecutive RLH meets

1931 was the first joint meet at RLH but the first recorded meet with the Wayfarers was Sept 1930 at Horton-in-Ribblesdale for a through trip of Long Kin East to Rift Pot.

It seems the enthusiasm for potholing waned, dormant for many years, now alive with joint meets at Lowstern.

Long may this tradition of shared experiences continue and not forget the characters who shared them.

From the Wayfarers Journal No.3 1933 p94

Whitsun 1932. Camping at GG using the bosun's chair the Wayfarers were introduced to 'the chambers, passages and intricacies of strange underground systems'. 'A meet well organised by an excellent commissariat'. Who else but Roberts and Booth.

From Book Review of YRC journals No 19 and 20 'The YRC are a sort of secret society of the climbing world and their journals are surrounded by a sort of romantic glamour'. The reviewer cannot have been on the GG meet but perhaps he sensed the YRC unease with the ladies mentioned in reports. Is it true the Wayfarers air brushed ladies out of their black and white photographs?

#### ODDS AND ENDS

From W Journal No.10 1950.

Letter to the Editor from a Wayfarer. Having extolled the delights of sharing huts, crags and eating together 'We are then most unexpectedly and seriously disturbed when we read something which suggests that there may occasionally be a departure from this commendable state of affairs'. On Page 166 of the Rucksack Journal for 1949 there is a two fold account of the joint meet of the Rucksack, Wayfarers and YRC at RLH Sept 1948. Part of the shorter report reads 'Attendance R.C 12; odds and ends 15....' What have we done I cry that we and our friends from the Dales should deserve the epitaph "odds and ends"? And, indeed who are the Odds and who are the Ends? "The End conveys a suggestion of the last word in desperation or despair. Does that refer to members of this Club. Are Yorkshire Ramblers still to be called 'odd' by reason of their predilection for caving?

Now this is calling the pot black as it is recorded that Wayfarers were caving in Lost Johns as early as 1930!

Interest started with Wheldon and Wilsons 'Flora of West Lancashire in which many Leck Fell pots and caves were mentioned and hearing Lost Johns had not been fully explored sallied forth. F Scott and R Crofton. The YRC were in Lost John as early as 1903.

To return to the letter:-

In view of the seriousness of the complaint the Hon Solicitor was consulted and, although shifty throughout, concluded the word Ends was not derogatory and argued that a certain majestic air was inseparable from a genuine end. He was less certain about Odd, probably had a common root with Odium but evaded the obvious conclusion by asserting this could only refer to a Yorkshire Rambler.

That could be a starter for one for Ian Crowther!

Alan Linford.

\* This has been agreed with the YRC celebrated historian and sage. David Smith.

#### THE YRC AND OUR WAYFARER FRIENDS AT ROBERTSON LAMB

1931

"Eight members met six or seven Wayfarers at the elaborately fitted Robertson Lamb Hut in Great Langdale, 20th-21st June 1931. The hut is on the south side of the new road, about a mile from Low Dungeon Gill. To make perfect, a grass path is required alongside the two mile of pitiless tar macadam above it. The weather was misty until Sunday afternoon, when came a touch of summer."

1932

"Only two members attended each of the next two fixtures, the 7th July with the Wayfarers at the Robertson Lamb hut, and Bank Holiday at the Tal-y-Braich Hut of the Rucksackers."

1934

"Seven men spent an enjoyable week-end at the Robertson Lamb Hut of the Wayfarers Club, in Great Langdale, 16-17th June, and had a good day on Bowfell Buttress."

1936

" 21st June, a joint meet with the Rucksack Club (5 men) and the Wayfarers (3), at Ingleton Bridge Hotel and a camp below Newby Moss.

"Much good climbing on Gimmer Crag was enjoyed on 13th September from the Robertson Lamb Hut."

1938

"In March from the Robertson Lamb Hut, rain and sleet made climbing beyond Middlefell Buttress too unpleasant."

" At the Horton Meet in June ten members of the Rucksack and the Wayfarers Clubs were taken to the bottom of Alum Pot."

" In September there were meets in Langdale with climbing on Gimmer and Dow Crag, and at Burnthwaite. The Wasdale Craggs were in mist but the walks over Esk Hause were actually in good weather."

1939

"In March the drive to Robertson Lamb Hut was through very heavy rain, but a fine, calm day followed, and there was good climbing and some snow work."

" At Whitsuntide the president (Clifford Chubb) led a party of twelve to Fermanagh, his twentieth year of membership. The Kindred Clubs were represented by Mr. P J H Unna, SMC; Mr H Spillsbury, WC; Mr F T Bancroft, Northern C & F Club; Mr. Mankington, RC; Mr Powell, CC; Mr Dawson, GC; Mr. T Mitchell, CPC.

1947

"At Great Langdale, Robertson Lamb Hut, 19th-20th September there were thirteen Ramblers as well as Wayfarers and Rucksackers. There was much climbing, even as far as Great Gable, and good weather."

1948

" Perfect weather was enjoyed in Langdale on 11th September and Gimmer Crag was popular - Palid Slabs, Asterisk, A, B, C and other climbs were done. Sunday was atrocious, but McKelvie & Kelsey climbed Raven Crag and Scout Crag, with a new route. (YRC men - Climb Ramblers Hangover)

1949

"Langdale was visited a second time in September, when a dozen members gathered at RLH with parties from the Rucksack and Wayfarers Clubs."

Extracts from YRC JOURNALS by F D Smith

## LADIES MEET - EDALE, DERBYSHIRE

April 20th - 22nd

This meet coincided with the 75th anniversary of the mass Kinder trespass which helped bring about our national parks. It also coincided with the announcement by the National Trust that they had just acquired the final bit of the massive and they now owned all of Kinder Scout.

The picturesque valley of Edale was the setting for the 2007 YRC Ladies meet. Members and their better halves began arriving during Friday afternoon to establish themselves in their accommodation, some camping, some in B&B's and the main group based at the small but comfortable Rambler Inn Country Hotel. With weather conditions very favourable, a good number of those that had

arrived relatively early managed to get out and stretch their legs to start soaking up their surroundings.

Most people decided to head up into the village to the Old Nags Head for dinner and the chance to catch up with each other and much reminiscing took place amid the consumption of fine food, wine and ale.

After breakfast on Saturday the party met in the car park of the Rambler to set off on the days activities.

Some were to set off for the Ladybower Reservoir and others in a loop including Barber Booth and Upper Booth. The main group drawn north by the pull of the start of the Pennines, set off with usual YRC vagueness, in the general direction of reaching the top of Grindsbrook Clough to consider options at that point and to see how the weather was holding up, being unseasonably pleasant.

It was a relaxed walk up Grindsbrook with good views opening up as we climbed higher scrambling over rocks towards the top. Once at the top of the Clough after a short break it was decided, not quite sure by whom, to head off towards Kinder Downfall over the moors of Kinder Scout.

Set off we did, but the moorland conditions of heather, peat, and deep gruffs proved very challenging to cross and the party became somewhat stretched out and a number of members were perturbed about the damage being done to the surface in the tinder dry conditions.

A decision was taken by some, to divert and pick up a proper path and achieve more comfortable walking conditions. Roy and Doreen, Rob and Gabrielle, Ian and Una and I set off along one of the dry deep Gruffs (these were in places a good 12-15 feet deep). We came out somewhere near to Crowden Tower and it was decided by the Ladies to take lunch, whilst much debating by the men took place trying to establish where exactly we were!

After lunch we headed back towards the top of Grindsbrook Clough, but this time crossing over and continuing in an easterly direction achieving a figure of eight heading towards Hartshorn. Continuing on this path via Upper Tor and Nether Tor, after taking in some excellent scenery and interesting slate formations, we started on our

descent proper following the track down Golden Clough, joining up with Grinds Brook below the start of Grindsbrook Clough. This was a less severe route and proved useful to be aware of, even if after the event! A welcome cup of tea/ale was then well received at the Old Nags Head seated in the garden, further enjoying the unseasonal weather.

The balance of the party hit the edge path further north and then followed us back but rather than crossing the entry route went via Jacobs Ladder and back by Barber Booth.

Around 7pm members and their wives started to assemble at the Rambler for our evening meal at which 31 were present, and the chef excelled himself despite the fact that the desert was Bakewell tart and not Pudding! I still have not tracked one down.

Sunday morning saw some depart after breakfast, including me in search of brake fluid, whilst others were heading for a relaxed walk around Rushup Edge and Mam Tor or a stop off to walk round the Chatsworth Estate.

Attending  
 Mike & Marcia Godden, Martyn Trasler  
 Ian & Dorothy Crowther, Roy & Doreen Denney  
 John and Janet Hemmingway, Paul & Ann Dover  
 Richard & Elizabeth Gowing, Tim & Elaine Josephy  
 Bill and Brenda Lofthouse, Richard & Ann Dover  
 Ian and Una Laing, Harry and Margaret Robinson.  
 David & Elspeth Smith, Alan & Angela Linford  
 Rob & Gabrielle Ibberson,

We were joined for the meal by Mike Smith and his wife, Helen. MT



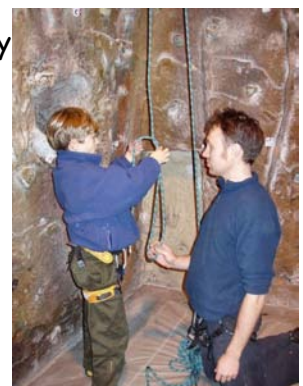
### 'Lads' and Dads Meet



Alan & Joe



Alister & Billy



Joe, Billy, Alex & Alan



Joe, Billy Jane, Alex & Alister



Joe, Issy & Alan



'Lads' and Dads Today



and Yesteryear



Beinn Dorain, Adrian Bridge



Tryfan, Mike Smith

Tryfan, Mick Boroff





## USEFUL WEB SITES

|                                 |                                |                                   |                                 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| AA                              | theaa.com                      | National Cycle Network            | sustrans.org.uk                 |
| Access Land CSS & ESAS          | countrywalks.defra.gov.uk      | National ExpressNational Parks    | gobycoach.comcnp.org.uk         |
| Access land in England          | countrysideaccess.gov.uk       | National Trails                   | nationaltrail.co.uk             |
| Access land in Scotland         | outdooraccess-scotland.com     | National Trust                    | nationaltrust.org.uk            |
| Access & Conservation Trust     | acesstrust.org.uk              | National Trust for Scotland       | nts.org.uk                      |
| Alpine Club                     | alpine-club.org.uk             | North York Moors National Park    | moors.uk.net                    |
| Amtrak rail travel              | amtrak.com                     | Northumberland National Park      | nnpa.org.uk                     |
| Bowline Club                    | bowline.f9.co.uk               | Oread Mountaineering Club         | oread.co.uk                     |
| Brecon Becons National Park     | breconbecon.org                | Peak District National Park       | peakdistrict.org                |
| British Orienteering Federation | britishorienteering.org.uk     | Pub guide (RJD)                   | charnwood.me.uk                 |
| British Waterways               | britishwaterways.co.uk         | Public transport information.     | pti.org.uk                      |
| Cairngorm Club                  | cairngormclub.org.uk           | Public transport information.     | traveline.org.uk                |
| Caledonian Macbrayne ferries    | calmac.co.uk                   | R.S.P.B.                          | rspb.org.uk                     |
| Carlisle Mountaineering Club    | carlislemc.co.uk               | RAC                               | rac.co.uk                       |
| Coast to coast walk             | coast2coast.co.uk              | Rail enquiries                    | nationalrail.co.uk              |
| Countryside Agency              | countryside.gov.uk             | Ramblers Association              | ramblers.org.uk                 |
| Countryside Council for Wales   | ccw.gov.uk                     | Royal Geographical Society        | rgs.org                         |
| Crag access database            | climbingcrags.co.uk            | Scotlands National Heritage       | snh.org.uk                      |
| Cyclist Touring Club            | ctc.org.uk                     | Scottish avalanche forecasts      | sais.gov.uk                     |
| Duke of Edinburgh Awards        | theaward.org                   | Scottish Mountaineering Council   | mountaineering-scotland.org     |
| English Heritage                | english-heritage.org.uk        | Ski Club of Great Britain         | ukskiclub.co.uk                 |
| English Nature                  | english-nature.org.uk          | Snowdonia National Park           | eryri-npa.gov.uk                |
| Europe route planning           | theaa.com/travelwatch/planner  | Southern Uplands way              | dumgal.gov.uk/southernuplandway |
| Fell & Rock Club                | frcc.co.uk                     | Speyside Way                      | speysideway.org                 |
| Fell Runners Association        | fellrunner.org.uk              | Summits information               | peakware.com                    |
| Foreign & Colonial Office       | fco.gov.uk                     | The Climbers Club                 | climbers-club.co.uk             |
| Forestry Commission             | forestry.gov.uk                | Translation service               | freetranslation.com             |
| Fylde Mountaineering Club       | fyldemc.org.uk                 | Travel guide- Lonely Planet       | lonelyplanet.com                |
| Grampian Club                   | grampianclub.org               | Travel guide- Rough               | roughguides.com                 |
| Greyhound Buses                 | greyhound.com                  | Traverse Holidays in Pyrenees     | traverseholidays.co.uk          |
| Gritstone Club                  | gritstoneclub.org.uk           | Trek America (and OZ/NZ)          | trekamerica.com                 |
| Guides                          | lonelyplanet.com               | Visitor information - Australia   | australia.com                   |
| Himalayan Kingdoms - trekking   | himalayankingdoms.com          | Visitor information - Canada      | keepexploring.ca/travelcanada   |
| Historic Houses Association     | hha.org.uk                     | Visitor information - New Zealand | purenz.com                      |
| Historic Scotland               | historic-scotland.gov.uk       | Visitor information - USA         | visitusa.org.uk                 |
| John Muir Trust                 | jmt.org                        | Walking in Scotland               | walkingwild.com                 |
| K E Adventure - trekking        | keadventure.com                | Walking in South West             | cornwall-devon.com              |
| Locations and routes            | multimap.com                   | Walking in the Lakes              | lakedistrictoutdoors.co.uk      |
| Long Distance Walkers Assoc.    | ldwa.org.uk                    | Weather BBC                       | bbc.co.uk/weather               |
| Maps & books                    | cordee.co.uk                   | Weather forecasts                 | accuweather.com                 |
| Maps & books                    | stanfords.co.uk                | West Highland way                 | west-highland-way.co.uk         |
| Maps & books                    | Themapshop.co.uk               | Wild life trusts                  | wildlifetrusts.org              |
| Maps                            | ordnancesurvey.co.uk           | Wolverhampton M'nt'neering Club   | wolverhamptonmc.co.uk           |
| Maps                            | harveymaps.co.uk               | Woodland trust                    | woodland-trust.org              |
| Medical advice                  | high-altitude-medicine.com     | World Health Organisation         | who.int/en/                     |
| Meteorological Office           | meto.gov.uk                    | Yorkshire Dales National Park     | yorkshiredales.org              |
| Michelin Guides                 | viamichelin.com                | Youth Hostels Association         | yha.org.uk                      |
| Midland Assoc. of Mountaineers  | themam.co.uk                   |                                   |                                 |
| MOD- access to military land    | access.mod.uk                  |                                   |                                 |
| Mount Everest Foundation        | mef.org.uk                     |                                   |                                 |
| Mountain Biking                 | trailquest.co.uk               |                                   |                                 |
| Mountain Heritage Trust         | thebmc.co.uk/mht               |                                   |                                 |
| Mountain Rescue Council         | mountain.rescue.org.uk         |                                   |                                 |
| Mountaineering Council Scotland | mountaineering-scotland.org.uk |                                   |                                 |

## CLUB MERCHANDISE

A wide range of outdoor and leisure clothing is available with the traditional YRC 'Yorkshire Rose' badge (in green, yellow & white silks), beautifully computer embroidered directly on to the clothing.

The range includes tee-shirts, sweatshirts, polo shirts, fleece jackets of several grades and designs, knitted jumpers, cagoules and parkas. There is a full range of sizes in a wide range of colours.

We keep in stock a sample range of stock and also keep embroidered cloth badges to sew onto your own items.

Discuss your requirements by contacting Rob Ibberson or better still; see him at a meet, where he will be able to show you the samples and illustrated catalogues showing all the items available.

# YRC



[www.yrc.org.uk](http://www.yrc.org.uk)

Affiliated to The British Mountaineering Council  
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