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KHUMBU SKYLINE AT DAWN

PHOTOGRAPH ROY DENNEY

ARTICLES

THE MONTE ROSA CIRCUIT

CLIMBING IN THE HAUTE SAVOIE

QUARRIES AS CLIMBING WALLS

THE FINAL MONRO

SLINGSBY - A NEW PERSPECTIVE

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THE VANISHING COUNTY - A HOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE

Roy Denney

In recent years we have seen a rapid increase in the popularity of rock climbing as a sport in its own right, both as part of a greater mountaineering scene, and simply as an excellent way to keep fit. The primary localities for climbing are of course the mountain areas to the north and west of a line from the Humber to the Exe, but increasingly people practice on indoor climbing walls.

In the lowlands to the south and west of the Humber-Exe line it is almost certain that any hard rock face -- including artificial 'faces' on disused built structures -- of height greater than a few metres will have been used for climbing practice by somebody at some time.

Leicestershire is the nearest hard-rock area to London and the South-East and consequently its mineral extraction industry is of significant economic importance nationally. Rock is exported from Leicestershire every year at a rate the equivalent of a block 500 metres by 500 metres and the County is disappearing on the backs of lorries and trains.

Moreover, quarrying changes the landscape and local amenities and we contend that it should be conducted such that its impact on both is minimised and any possible ongoing compensating benefit is maximised.

As climbers, we see disused quarries as rock climbing opportunities. The economic value as the closest hard rock to London also means a decent climbing quarry in Leicestershire would be a very welcome recreational asset for the many climbers based in the southeast.

BMC statistics suggest that around 40-45% of active participants in climbing are resident in London, the South East and the Midlands. Within the 'Midlands' area there are 43 active clubs.

It is usually thought that there is little or no worthwhile climbing in Leicestershire. There are two reasons for this. The first is that in reality, there really isn't a lot of climbing to be had in Leicestershire and the second is that the guide book to what there was has been out of print for many years and since publication, much has changed. The longer climbs are all in quarries to which access is always changing. Even worse, it had become financially convenient to fill them in, either for landfill or as a health and safety issue and although a new guidebook has been in preparation for many years such external factors have kept undoing the work and preventing completion. Without a guidebook local knowledge has been lost and once-popular crags have become overgrown and obscure boulders 'lost'.

It follows that most climbers have to travel often long distances (at considerable 'carbon cost' not to mention financial cost) and, as a corollary, devote many hours in simply getting into a position in which they can climb. It should be pointed out that this relationship isn't static or absolute: changes in climbing methods and attitudes mean that cliffs have dropped in and out of use by climbers.

A very good example is the limestone cliffs of the Peak District, which were not exploited by climbers until technical changes in the sport in the 1960s enabled them to be used safely. In general, these technical changes have enabled climbing to take safely place on rock that in the past might have been considered too loose or unreliable for the sport. The effect has been greatly to expand the available 'resource' for climbing.

It is also implied that the resource value of any rock face relates as much to its proximity to centres of population as it does to its absolute height or quality of its climbing. Thus, for example, the very small, friable sandstone cliffs of the High Weald at Harrison's Rocks, the nearest outdoor climbing for many Londoners, have such value to the climbing community that they have been purchased by the BMC. Similarly, the limestone and gritstone crags of the Peak District have a value to the climbing community that is out of all proportion to their height and climbing quality, to the extent that they are known to climbers world-wide as the location of some of the hardest rock climbing on our planet. Such fame is a direct consequence of their location close to almost all the populous cities of northern England.

The shortage of real rock in a convenient location has created a demand for climbing walls. One might think that the existence of climbing walls would reduce the need for real outdoor rock for people to climb on and, to a certain extent it has, but the experience is very different. Probably the nearest analogy is the difference between indoor stadium track running and fell running. They are similar, but different and each has a place. Because people are charged money to climb on a climbing wall, legally the environment has to be made safe and climbing becomes a form of indoor gymnastics. Outdoors on real rock is different. It becomes potentially dangerous as we as a club have sadly recently been tragically reminded, but that is where the personal challenge lies. It is apparently very dangerous but knowledge, technique and equipment make it relatively safe, as the insurance premiums indicate. We now call it "traditional" climbing to distinguish it from climbing walls.

Leicestershire, despite a lack of real elevation, is 'blessed' with bare rugged uplands as a result of very ancient mountains of hard old rock poking through the more-recent marl deposits. The upland soil is thin and poor and is frequently rough moorland or old oak woodlands. Charnwood Forest was described by Burton in 1622 as "of hard barren soil, full of hills, woods, rocks of stone, tors and dells of a kind of slate." Things have not changed much as members on the August mid-week meet can vouchsafe and the ancient summits still have small crags and tors set in areas of great scenic beauty. However although the rock is good, the climbs are short, rarely being more than boulder problems.

This hard rock has always been of use locally; the walls of the fields and old houses are built from it.

There are even slates on the roofs split from it. The places these useful stones originally came from were the summits where the rocks were exposed. Sometimes the quarries ate deeply into the hill, but usually the summits survived. Slate outcrops were followed downward into deep pits and this and the quarrying of the ancient hills has left a network of old quarries and pits in the hard rock areas of the county.

So Leicestershire crags can give bouldering opportunities on hilltops and in woods and longer routes in the old quarries.

There are two main rock types from the climbing viewpoint - slate and granite, and both occur as natural tors and as quarries. The natural tors of slate are usually in woods because the soil is too poor for much else. The slate quarries are of modest scale, unlike North Wales, and quite frequently flooded.

Quarries are sometimes very deep like that at Stoney Stanton which provides for cave diving training. Stoney Cove is now the UK's National Diving Centre. They were still extracting granite until 1958 but the hole this quarrying left filled rapidly with spring water and was recognised as the "National Dive Centre" in 1963.

The granite also occurs as natural tors on some hills and almost every village has an old small quarry. Later larger Victorian quarries were made possible by the advent of cheap transport using new railways and these are generally big and intimidating. Leicestershire was producing over a million tons of granite a year by 1900. However, some quarries are modest and could almost pass as natural crags.

Recently the quarrying of stone has reached epidemic proportions and absolutely massive quarries, square miles in extent, and hundreds of feet deep have appeared. These new quarries have either eaten up the old quarries or filled them in with overburden from land freshly prepared for quarrying. None of the massive new quarries has yet been abandoned but it is obvious that just transporting the fill to refill them will be an enormous nuisance locally. With luck, they might survive and even leave some climbable rock.

The reason that Leicestershire has so many quarries is that there is no hard rock for roadstone etc. to the south-east. Leicester granite is the nearest (and thus cheapest) hard rock to London. Leicestershire produces 40% of the hard rock quarried in England, a vastly disproportionate share. Indeed the contract for the Olympics site was given to a local company because of the quality of the stone but also its proximity to London and the fact that our biggest quarry has its own rail link.

This quarry is already one of the biggest in Europe and has eaten away one side of Bardon Hill, the highest point in Leicestershire.

They now wish to start excavating at the other side of the hill, a process likely to take at least 30 years. The area in question is at about 250 metres above sea level and is to be removed down to about 50 metres ultimately to become a lake. The outcome of a massive planning application

sanctioning the project with conditions, has just been published, which has in part triggered a major meeting to discuss the future of such quarries which I have recently attended. During the consultation stage we amongst others suggested possible diversions to the footpath network, new access points and long term ideas for making good the area. Not many of us will live to see this but we do have the chance to help shape the area for future use by the community.

The existing quarry workings are still digging deeper and will end up about 40 metres below sea level but would then be part-filled with the material known as overburden that overlies the rock to be quarried in the new part. Future use of the new quarry is yet to be determined but it has been suggested that it ultimately become a new country park.

There are technical problems in leaving a quarry suitable for rock climbing, and also safe from rock-fall. These must be overcome if the land or water at the base is going to have any recreational use. The last cut has to be made with a "gentle" explosive that does not shatter the rock. The technique has to be more like quarrying for building stone. Bardon was once quarried like this and we are sure that it could be done again. Also, from the amenity viewpoint, any remaining open faces should be made to look more natural. There is a technique called Restoration Quarrying where old quarries are made to look more natural with buttresses and slabs. This is best (and more cheaply) done at the time when the heavy equipment is there and not later. This comes at a cost as some production is inevitably lost. Current quarrying methods leave a brutal ex-industrial landform behind, but there is no need for this.

For climbing purposes access to the rock is needed and a terrace above the waterline (the quarries will eventually partially fill with water) needs to be left. South facing cliffs are the most useful for climbing; north-facing cliffs get overgrown.

Health and safety issues can also be significant for disused quarries if the requirement to keep them securely fenced for eternity is to be avoided. It has been found in the Malverns (The Gullet) that if the area back from the quarry edge is stripped so that it does not get overgrown, then people see the edge and keep away from it. The same happens on coastal footpaths. Also if accidental drownings are to be avoided, the region in the vicinity of the waterline needs to have a gentle gradient. A footpath circuit path about the waterline would be a useful and could be an attractive recreational amenity.

Quarries don't have to be eyesores. Their impact can be minimised if thought is given to their development early enough. Can the flooded areas have a use? Sailing, fishing, diving, cold-water swimming for triathletes, etc? Think positive!

Unfortunately money speaks and left to their own devices, commercial operations will not pay much attention to these considerations but at the planning stage when permission to quarry is being sought conditions can be laid down to ensure best long-term benefit to the whole community.

Disused and abandoned quarries often have sufficient suitable properties to make them important climbing locations. Much of the Avon Gorge in Bristol is quarried and there are several excellent climbing quarries in both the limestone and gritstone of the Peak District. Historically Leicestershire had some excellent climbing quarries but most have been destroyed either by recent quarrying or by landfill. This is not always the best option. Can anyone honestly say that Stoney Cove, the National Diving Centre, would have been better used for landfill?

The all day meeting we have had was to discuss hard rock quarry restoration for Leicestershire and brought together representatives of user groups, the commercial quarrying companies, legal experts on access and health and safety, the local authorities and wildlife conservation groups, to try and agree a way forward. One of the speakers and organisers of the event was Geoff Mason, now retired but an Emeritus Professor of Chemical Engineering and a fellow member of the Local Access Forum I Chair. Another contributor was David J. Unwin, Emeritus Professor in Geography, University of London and I am indebted to both of them for some of the material used in this article.

Under the auspices of the County Council we had numerous presentations from representatives of the quarry companies, planners, explosive experts and the local wild life trust; all highlighting the problems and opportunities and the BMC played a major part. Dave Turnbull CEO of the BMC gave the climbers view and Elfyn Jones, the BMC's Access and Conservation Officer gave the BMC view on access, health and safety and the law. Detail can be seen at — http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/community_services_planning/planning_general/quarries_in_leicestershire/quarries_vision_forum.htm

For those of a technical bent, rocks laid down during the Precambrian Period are the oldest found within the Charnwood area, and date from around 560-600 million years ago. At this time what is now England lay within the southern hemisphere along a subduction zone, where the pressures from plate movement caused magma to rise to the surface and form a chain of active volcanoes known as an island arc. The material erupting from these volcanoes accumulated on the sea floor surrounding the volcanoes, forming the rocks of the 'Charnian Supergroup', which is at least 3.5km thick.

Primitive life began to evolve at this time, the fossils of which can be found throughout Charnwood Forest. The first fossil that was ever described that came from undoubted Precambrian rocks was a found in this area and called Charnia. Until this point the Precambrian was thought to be completely devoid of fossils and consequently possibly of life. Igneous rocks, for example the diorites that intruded the Charnian Supergroup, are worked in quarries throughout Charnwood Forest.

During the Cambrian Period when subduction finally ceased, the volcanoes were worn down by erosion allowing the sea to advance over the land. The Swithland Slates represent the muddy material laid down on the sea floor at this time, probably about 530 million years ago.

Fossilised animal burrows can be found within these rocks and examples are particularly notable on slate gravestones, as in Ratby churchyard. Swithland Slate has been quarried since Roman time and continues to a small extent, to be worked today.

This was followed by the Ordovician Period and about 450 million years ago, igneous rock, created through the solidification of molten magma was forced to the surface by subduction, forming the Mountsorrel Complex. These igneous rocks are known as granodiorites and are made up of large crystals due to a slow cooling process. It is believed that Ordovician granodiorite has been worked around Mountsorrel since Roman times but there is also evidence of Late Neolithic, Early Bronze Age, Early Iron Age and Norman activity. The Buddon Wood (Mountsorrel) Quarry currently exploits a particularly large mass of Ordovician granodiorite.

The collision of two continental plates occurred towards the end of the Silurian Period, approximately 420 million years ago. This caused the formation of mountains, the remnants of which today form the Charnwood Hills. Structures produced by this movement include folds and cleavage, the latter formed when the crystallisation of new minerals cause rocks to break along parallel surfaces. This occurs in all Charnian rock but is particularly prominent in Swithland Slate.

At the beginning of the Carboniferous Period, 355 million years ago, England and Scotland lay close to the equator and formed part of a continental landmass that was partially covered with a warm sea. Sediments from this period were rich in calcareous fossils and formed as Carboniferous Limestone, which can be found in the northern parts of Charnwood Forest, such as found at Grace Dieu. This rock does not extend throughout the whole area, however, since much of Charnwood was still a mountain range at this time. In the latter part of the Carboniferous Period the sea over sections of Charnwood was replaced by a large delta, containing humid swamps and rainforests, in which the Coal Measures accumulated. Coal seams, ironstone and fireclay deposits resulted from these environments, and can be found to the west of Charnwood Forest where they form part of the Leicestershire coalfield.

The Permian Period was one of constant erosion, lasting about 40 million years. This erosion stripped away most of the Carboniferous rock. During the Triassic Period the Charnwood area became covered in sediments. The rugged nature of the landscape produced a highly irregular erosional unconformity, seen in many Charnwood quarries, with drainage courses such as wadis commonly developing. Initially, sand and gravel was transported by large rivers flowing north and north eastwards across England, an example of which is the Shepshed Sandstone. In the latter part of the Triassic period England moved further away from the equator and a vast desert of Aeolian dust formed the red muds and silts of the Mercia Mudstone Group. During this period, flash floods caused water to cover large areas which deposited thin beds of siltstone and sandstone. A high, saline water table caused the precipitation of gypsum.

The continual accumulation of sediment coupled with subsidence eventually caused the Mercia Mudstone to completely bury the Charnwood mountain range. Amongst features that have been uncovered are 'tors' of granodiorite formed by wind erosion during the Triassic Period, seen in Buddon Wood Quarry.

Once the Charnwood Hills had been buried, a tropical sea advanced across the area, depositing Jurassic and Cretaceous mudstone and limestone. This sea was destroyed by tectonic movement accompanying the opening of the Atlantic Ocean.

By the beginning of the Quaternary Period around 2 million years ago, much of the strata formed during the Jurassic, Triassic and Cretaceous Periods had been eroded from the Charnwood Forest area. The onset of the Anglian Ice advance, approximately 440,000 years ago, saw the advance of glaciers across much of England.

From tills deposited in Charnwood, two ice-sheets covered the area: a sheet from the north-west carrying Triassic and Carboniferous rock; and a sheet from the north-east carrying fragments of flint and chalk. As the glaciers retreated 'superficial deposits' accumulated consisting of sand and gravel and till.

The ancient Charnwood Forest and the Needwood Forest in Staffordshire are slowly being joined together as the new National Forest project develops. Charnwood Forest itself contains numerous country parks the largest being Bradgate, Beacon Hill, Swithland Woods and the Outwoods.

Members on our recent meet had the opportunity to enjoy this area when we saw the walkers taking in the Charnwood tops and the long-bike-riders even more of the area if perhaps in less detail.



Beacon Hill Summit



The view from Bradgate Park



Deer on Bradgate Summit



WILLIAM CECIL SLINGSBY

Cecil was President of the YRC from 1893 to 1903.

He was also President of the Climbers Club from 1904 to 1906, President of the Fell & Rock, 1910 to 1912 and Vice President of the Alpine Club 1906 to 1908.

He spent 15 seasons in Norway before writing his book on the area where he is still treated as a legend.

Numerous tributes have been published about his climbing exploits and his formal obituary is to be found in Vol vi NO. 19 of our journal (1930) on page 66

We are indebted to John Snoad for the following article which he has also offered to the Climbers Club and to Albert Chapman who has unearthed an old letter written by Cecil which throw a lot more light on Cecil, the man.

Wm. Cecil Slingsby (1849-1929) His Background & Working Life

Wm Cecil Slingsby died in his eighty-first year, in 1929 just eighty-one years ago. Since then many articles have appeared about him in magazines and club journals but only the very earliest were written by those who knew him and, as the years have gone by and not surprisingly, inaccuracies have crept in. Even his place of death is recorded incorrectly in an otherwise reliable encyclopædia of mountaineers.

I first came across his name during an early visit to Norway in 1960, following a day out on Skåla, some 1800 metres above what was then the tiny village of Loen. Invited back to my companion's home in the evening, I found myself faced not only with his family but a few of his neighbours, all apparently curious about Slingsby and keen to hear what this young Englishman could reveal about him. I'm afraid I was a great disappointment - I'd never heard of him!

My apologies for this personal digression but it is curiously relevant. My host's first question makes that clear, "We know all about Slingsby's mountaineering but nothing of his private and working life, so tell us about that."

Imagine my embarrassment but equal delight when later I spotted not one but three copies of his book in an antiquarian bookshop in Marylebone High Street - and at three pounds and ten shillings each! They now sell in Norway for more than two thousand - if you can find one.

That question tells us a lot about Slingsby's reputation. Even after all these years he remains a household name in Norway even amongst non-mountaineers. Is it not curious that he is almost forgotten in his own country and even in his birth county of Yorkshire?

I was to return to Norway more than thirty times and my interest in Slingsby became stronger each year. I have no regrets but if I'd been earning my living as a biographer I would have starved - very little of substance survives, our hero had all but disappeared and the few items kept by his family were lost during the blitz on London at the beginning of the Second World War.

Fast forward some four decades and I found myself sitting facing Slingsby's youngest daughter, Eleanor, in her home. This time much better informed but not expecting my ninety year old hostess to be quite so lively - I should have known better! But my everlasting memory is of looking into those blue-grey eyes and having the weird feeling that I was facing the man himself.

We all know that it was Slingsby's first ascent of Store Skagastølstind that made him famous. At the time, the mountain was believed to be the highest in Norway and many thought it unclimbable, but he managed it late in the day, and solo, having knocked off a number of first ascents during the previous few days! The name, happily for foreigners, is shortened by the Norwegians to Storen, 'The Big One' and by the English to Skag. With help from mist, of which there is plenty, it looks a bit like the Matterhorn!

Eleanor displayed her father's enthusiasm and energy. She was involved in the setting up of the first women's climbing club in Britain and climbed Storen during the fiftieth anniversary meet that took place at Turtegrø in 1926, not once but twice. The first using the modern route up Heftye's Chimney and the second using her father's route up the glacier that carries his name.

Most readers of this will know that nowadays the climb is not considered difficult, indeed I have friends who have done it many times, but the weather and falling stones still make it an excursion to be taken seriously and, when the weather is stable, overcrowding adds to the problems - how things change!

My contact with Eleanor was exciting and fruitful but I should mention that her memories of her father were those of a loving daughter and that she had been pressed to tell her story many times. Some who have looked at the odd note that she wrote on the reverse of family photographs, as we all do, may have overlooked the fact that she was not born until 1895 and so a date or a detail may be wrong not surprising when we bear in mind that by the time of Slingsby's last (two) visits to Norway in 1921, Cecil's active years were over and she was still only twenty-six.

And why do I call him Cecil? It was common for families to give their eldest son the first name of their fathers and even daughters that of their mothers - a practice followed by the Slingsbys, so it is very important that we call him Cecil and not William. Cecil was the name that he used and was known by throughout his life and he confirmed it for all time by ensuring that his one and only book, *Norway: The Northern Playground*, published in early 1904, has Wm. Cecil Slingsby on its spine and title page.

The story of the book and its variants that appeared later, would fill an article on its own and it continues to this very day. What the man himself would have thought of a large group of Norwegians from Årdal visiting his birthplace and graveside recently, and of us pouring over every word of his private letters and of re-arranging the contents of his book into chronological order, one can only imagine. I suspect he would have had a chuckle - but what about the man himself?

He was known for his enthusiasm both for the natural world and its mountains, a characteristic that clearly shows in the eyes of portraits that survive. Slingsby enjoyed exploration as much as climbing but his reputation as a mountaineer resulted in his lifelong interest in botany being all but forgotten. His mountaineering outside Norway too has also taken second place despite it amounting to more than many achieve in a lifetime. He even read papers to the Club Alpino Italiano in Milan! But this is about his private and working life, so we must delve into family and industrial history to discover how this man was able to achieve so much whilst still playing a major role in the running of two substantial cotton mills, a business that employed hundreds and one he co-owned with his cousin - John Arthur.

He was born in 1849 in the hamlet of Bell Busk, between Skipton and Settle but the story starts much earlier in the village of Carleton-in-Craven, later to be the location of two large mills but in the mid eighteenth century a typical English village with church, manor house, and small school. Although spinning and weaving went on in many cottages, its main occupation was farming - like so many others Carleton was an agricultural village - but change was on the way.

Nearby Skipton was soon to get its first mills and some of the entrepreneurs who owned them lived in Carleton. Thus by the early nineteenth century Cecil's father William, and uncle John, then youngsters, were rubbing shoulders with the children of mill owners.

Barely in their twenties, these two young men found their mother widowed and the owner of a substantial farming and cattle rearing business (The Airedale Heifer was theirs and reared on the East Riddlesden Hall Estate where the family rented pasture) as well as running domestically based cotton spinning and weaving just at a time when an early water powered cotton mill at nearby Bell Busk had fallen into disuse and had been put up for sale.

The family rented the mill, complete with machinery, and the two young men went to live in its mill house, probably taking a couple of servants with them and returning home on a Sunday to attend church and have lunch with their mother. And we can safely assume that they used the unemployed men from the mill, some of whom still lived nearby, to show them how to use the machinery. This early 'hands on' experience is probably the key to the industrial success of the Slingsby family.

During the following twenty years the two men made a fortune and in 1849 were able to build a weaving mill back in their home village, and in 1861 an even larger one, thus both spinning and weaving were transferred to Carleton, something that would transform the village for all time.

The reason why these events are so important in the history of the Slingsby family rests on that early experience at Bell Busk. The construction of the second and largest mill in Carleton coincided with the American Civil War, a war that stopped most cotton coming into Britain and one that caused great hardship in its cotton industry. Many mills went on half time but the Slingsby's bought cotton from north-west India and, using their early experience, were able to adjust their machinery to process the different material and keep their mills running - it must have given them a substantial advantage in the cotton markets of Bradford and Manchester - yes, Bradford - it was not entirely a wool town!

We have eight years of the diary of Cecil's father William - it starts when they lived at Bell Busk where all Cecil's five siblings were born. In it we get our first hint that Cecil was tougher than most even at an early age. He records the family having had a long day out using their pony and trap with Cecil accompanying on horseback. "The family returned tired out but, as usual, Cecil was as fresh as ever." Cecil's horsemanship, a skill as essential then as driving is today, was to be of help in Norway when he was older. He got around on mountain roads and tracks and did so successfully, looking after the horse even when the going was rough.

When Cecil's parents moved the family back to Carleton, an event that took place on the first of May 1862, their new home Beech Hill had just been completed. It was, and remains, a fine house with stables and accommodation for seven servants, but it is not a grand house compared to those built by other mill owners at the time. The number seven repeats itself in the number of flats that exist within it today (plus one in the Coach House) and, when built it had all the latest facilities - a fresh water well in its basement and a stone slab alongside weighing over one tonne - the 'refrigerator' of its day.

Modern housing now stands on much of its lawns, tennis courts, and vegetable gardens, but the front garden remains much as it was, so that one can still see the very spot where the famous photograph of Cecil and Algernon Dewhurst, Cecil standing and Algernon lying, outside their tent complete with starched union jack and smouldering camp fire.



On its back and in Cecil's handwriting, "Algernon Dewhurst and Wm. Cecil Slingsby in the year 1874 - Ready for Skagastølstinden."

The tent was used in Stølsmaradalen in bad weather when an ascent was impossible. To my good friend Anfind Jørgensen Vetti, from W.C.S."



This dedication settles any doubt about its date that has been raised over the years but, perhaps more significantly, it confirms that Cecil's previously declared intentions were serious. Norway's 'highest' and 'unclimbable' mountain was to be his! Whilst Cecil proved the latter untrue, it was a little while before the top took second place to Galdhøpiggen - higher by only sixty-four metres.

Cecil's and his siblings were educated at home in their younger years but went to various public schools when they became teenagers - Cecil to the boys school at Cheltenham, an establishment in which his father had invested money with Cecil's later education in mind. Our man spent three years there from the age of thirteen before going into the mill, his father moving him around from department to department until he knew the business.

He then became an 'overseer' and later the mills one and only salesman, his jovial and friendly demeanour doubtless contributing to his success, which was quite exceptional.

Cecil's co-ownership of the mills with his cousin John Arthur was not a happy one. The cousins were not the closest of friends, their somewhat

abrasive relationship possibly made worse by Cecil inheriting four years before his younger cousin, thus becoming his superior on two counts. The bad feeling continued throughout their lives but was not, as is sometimes thought, a major factor in the later closure of the mills.

Cecil, often away from Carleton buying raw cotton in Liverpool and selling in the markets of Bradford and Manchester, was sometimes thought to be on holiday and so criticism tended to stick. But we have a report of him selling ten thousand pounds worth of goods one morning and still only having a pint and a sandwich for lunch! We know his cousin and principal business partner resented the time he spent mountaineering but conveniently overlooked the time he spent on various boards and committees, of which he was a member of many.

So Cecil's working life was just as successful as his mountaineering but sadly the written record looks different. His thorough knowledge of both business and process, and his efforts to modernise the mill and its products, essential to combat competition from abroad, have been forgotten.

What remains is a record of him being thrown out of the family business when he was just sixty years of age. He was devastated and could hardly believe that his brothers and sisters, directors of the company, could be so easily misled by his cousin and without his knowledge, but John Arthur had convinced them that Cecil was a liability and his modernisation efforts doomed to expensive failure.

Cecil found himself without a pension and no salary - and a lump sum, his share of the business, much smaller than expected. He sold the local pub and some local property but, with empty houses in the village, there was little interest in property and prices were low. He moved into a house just north of Morecambe Bay, borrowed rent free from his wife's family. It must be said that it is in a most beautiful position with a stunning view southwards over the estuary - but it was not his own. He and his family lived there happily for eight years but moved several times before finally settling at Cartmel in 1924.

Without Cecil's modernisation and new products, the mills struggled on for another twenty-one years but were never really successful and were closed by the bank in October 1930, a year after Cecil's death.

The smaller weaving mill was demolished in the mid seventies to make way for modern housing whilst the larger New Mill of 1861/62, now a listed Grade II building, was turned into flats. Carleton's industrial period was over and its cotton industry now beyond human memory.

Cecil sometimes claimed he was a poor man! A relative term maybe but he was certainly culturally very rich. Apart from being President, Vice-President, Honorary Member, and member of many clubs and societies, he spoke Norwegian well, lectured to clubs and societies and wrote profusely for club journals, an occupation that culminated in his book.

It was his intention to produce a second edition in which material from Southern Norway was to be replaced with that from the North and Arctic Norway, but the death of his youngest son in the First World War, dampened even his enthusiasm and the work was never completed.

His character is further revealed when in old age, no longer a horseman, he finally acquired a car - an Italian open tourer driven by a chauffeur with a wooden leg! The two of them out and about must have been a sight worth seeing!

Cecil's last visit to Norway was in the autumn of 1921 with his youngest daughter, Eleanor. That they had an audience with the King in Oslo is well known but a little story related by Eleanor is worth retelling. "Mr Slingsby..." said the King. "Do you have trouble with staff?" Father wasn't sure what he meant and shuffled a bit. "Do you mean with servants, sir?" answered father. "Yes" said the King. "I'd like to offer you a cup of tea but they've all gone out shopping!"

Less well known and in Bergen at the start of the same visit, is that Cecil dedicated a plaque to sailors lost in the First World War. Several thousand people turned out for the ceremony and to hear his speech, which he made in Norwegian. The speech was published in the press next day and the plaque can be seen today down near the waterfront and the Rosenkrans Tower.

An interesting modern development is the establishment of Slingsbystiftinga - The Slingsby Trust - in Cecil's old stomping ground of Utladalen, the valley that runs north-east from Årdal right into Jotunheimen.

Dedicated to outdoor life and the preservation of anything Slingsby related, it shares a small visitor centre with the National Park Authority at Skåri, near Hjelle and is supported by the Klingenberg Hotel at Årdalstangen. The hotel, once owned by Cecil's old friend and guide Jens Klingenberg, has been completely rebuilt and although modern has a strong mountain theme. Of real interest is its permanent exhibition of Cecil's sketches, remarkable in that they are facsimiles virtually indistinguishable from the originals - a wonder of modern technology.

Cecil would have approved!

Cecil died in a nursing home at Hurstpierpoint in Sussex in August 1929, aged eighty and is buried in the churchyard of Saint Mary's, Carleton-in-Craven - the village where he ran the mills, trained the church choir and played the organ.

The list of his interests and activities is long and remarkable: Botanist, caver, chorister, choirmaster, climber, cricketer, footballer, mountaineer, music lover, organist, pianist, skater, sketcher and writer.

I only wish I'd known about it on that summer evening back in 1960!

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The following is a letter from Cecil Slingsby to Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907) the renowned Norwegian composer and pianist, perhaps best known for his incidental music to Henrik Ibsen's play Peer Gynt (which includes In the Hall of the Mountain King). Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway.

There is no record as to whether Katharine got her autograph.

August 20th 1900 —

BEECH HILL,
CARLETON,
SKIPTON-IN-GRAVEN.

Dear Herr Grieg

I venture to send to you by this post some re-print copies of papers which I have written on Norway, as you were good enough to express an interest in one which Frøken Bertheau showed to you at Tivertedro.

They are however very light, & wholly unworthy of so great a subject as your glorious old mountains, which I love most

sincerely & with an affection which deepens with each successive visit.

Please pardon me for saying that, when I hear or play your music, familiar scenes in your grand old North land are often recalled to my mind, & thus I enjoy a two-fold pleasure. I picture the stern & wild fjeld, the pure snowfields, the pine woods, the fjord, the fog, & the gentle beauties of nature & I feel

very grateful to the composer who has so beautifully & faithfully represented by music his country's especial charms.

Pray excuse me for saying this.

My eldest girl, ^{Katharine,} who has been already twice in Norway, hearing that I am writing to you has just said in her impetuous school girl manner "Do ask Herr Grieg to give me his autograph" & as the child has

a happy way of getting what she wants from her father, I said. I would do so —

I am writing a book on mountains in Norway, but find that it is a much more formidable task than that of climbing the mountains themselves.

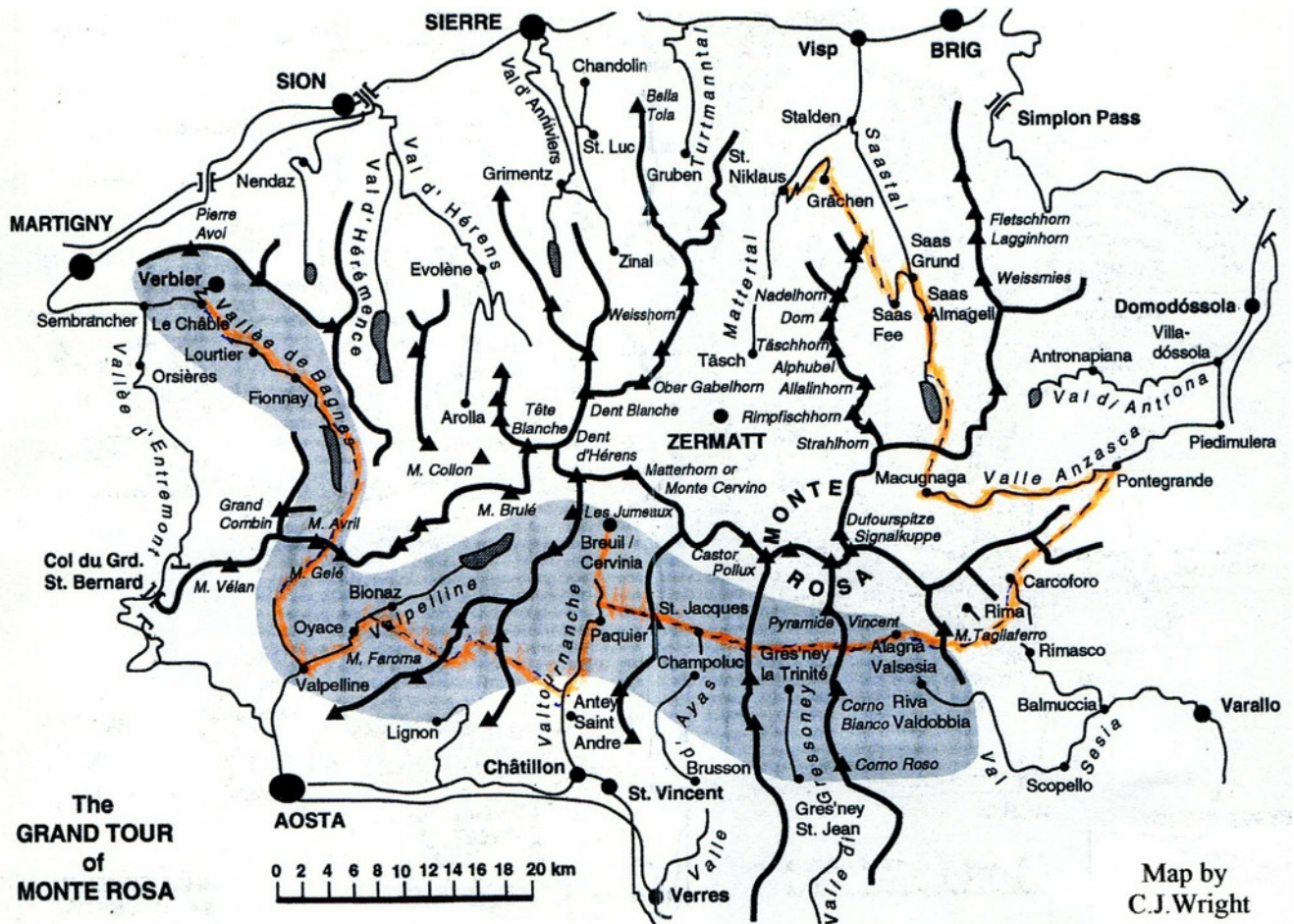
Believe me to remain
Yours faithfully,
Wm Cecil Slingsby —

THE GRAND TOUR OF MONTE ROSA

Jack Short

Introduction

In 1995 A Cicerone guide was published entitled "The Grand Tour of Monte Rosa" by C.J.Wright in 2 volumes. As I had already done a number of the classic treks in the Alps over a period of years this seemed like a good idea. The problem was where to start. Because I was already well acquainted with the Chamonix –Zermatt route, which follows the Northern part of the route, I decided on the Italian section, but starting at Martigny, as recommended in Volume 1.



Day 1

So in July 1999 I and friend Denis took the train and bus to Heathrow and BA flight to Geneva. Then train to Martigny and the little train to Le Chable where the bus to Fionnay (1490m) departed at 6.20 pm and took us up the Val de Bagnes almost exactly 12 hours after leaving home.

Day 2

Having taken the precaution of making a reservation, we were duly installed in the Hotel Grand Combin for the night, and checked out the position of the start of the footpath to the Mauvoisin Barrage (1964m). This is a curving dam built to hold back the river Drance and provide hydro electric power. Seven kilometres and a couple of hours later, having failed to find the rare *Saxifragea diapensoides*, mentioned in the guidebook, we arrived at this impressive construction, with

an even better panorama of the mountains Grand Combin and Mont Blanc de Cheilon in the distance

We crossed the Barrage and plodded through the snow to the frozen Lac de Tsofeiret at 2572m, with the pass about 70m higher.

This probably took us about 8 km and 3 hrs. (We don't walk very fast as some of you probably know). A slippery descent and a short traverse across rocks brought us to the welcome sight of the SAC Chanrion Hut (2462m). An alternative sight was a party of young ladies practicing crevasse rescue on the way to the Hut. We know it was only a practice because we met them in the Hut later. The Chanrion Hut has a nominal capacity of 100 beds but as it seems to be rather remote

from civilisation there were few people there to enjoy the usual menu of Spaghetti Bolognese.

Day 3

The next day's task was the drop down to the bridge over the river Drance and the long traverse to the crossing into Italy via the Fenêtre de Durand (2797m), a snow covered pass 5km and 2½hrs after leaving the Chanrion Hut, without customs these days. An uneventful 10km and 4½hr walk past Balme and down to the village of Glassier (1549m) saw us at the head of the road in the Ollomont valley. The only memory I have of that walk is the cobbled path, which was extremely uncomfortable in my lightweight fell running shoes, and the lack of food, except a Mars bar each. A further 1½km found us at the small Hotel Mont Gelé late in the afternoon without a reservation, where we had to race a number of prospective clients for the last room in the hotel. Fortunately they had a car and were not too worried. Unfortunately, the Hotel did not do meals but had an arrangement with a restaurant in the next village!

Needless to say we were waiting at the door when it opened, and did justice to a superb meal.

Day 4

The next day a short walk down the road brought us to the large village of Ollomont (1356m) and 6km further was the larger village of Valpelline. Our next objective was the village of Oyace from whence the following day our long day of walking to the Sanctuary and Oratorio de Cuney (CAI 2656m) would commence. As we expected this to take at least 7 hours we decided that today we would travel via the comfort of the local bus, leaving Valpelline at 12.30 and arriving at Oyace half an hour later. This was duly accomplished and the search for a hotel began. According to the Guide book there were only two hotels in the valley, the Valentino and the Dzovenno, neither of which we found, but we did find a good hotel at Closé (1457m) almost at the start of the following day's walk. I think this was the former Hotel Omemma which the guide book said was closed. At dinner we joined a young couple who said they were members of the UK Alpine Club and were going part of the same route as us.

Day 5

There are a number of routes out of the Valpelline, out of which we had selected the *Alta Via delle Valle d'Aosta No 1* (AVVA No 1), about 14km and 7 hours away from our next night's accommodation at the Oratorio. We found the start of the path very easily but so did a giant St. Bernard sheep dog that seemed determined to come home with us! We spent some considerable time trying to shoo it away to no avail, until our dinner companions arrived. They knew we were running out of time and volunteered to take it back to the village to give us time to get away. They overtook us later and we were very grateful. The route followed the line of the Buthier River, which in its lower stages cuts out a spectacular gorge crossed by a stone bridge dating from 1688. About 7km and 3½ hours later we arrived at some chalets before climbing steeply up to the Colle de Vessona (2783m) another 1½ hours later.

A newish CAI Refuge "Rosaire and Cleremont" is only a few minutes away but we still had a long way to go—more haste less speed—a short distance along the ridge I stepped onto a patch of thin ice and one leg went into a hole up to my thigh and the toes of my shoe turned up preventing me from getting out! Thank heaven for ice axes; we had to cut down several feet of snow and ice to get me out.

Still onwards we went and after a further three Colles, 3 hours and careful route finding we arrived at our destination—the *Sanctuario and Oratorio di Cuney* (2656m), in the fading light. Needless to say, in this wild desolate remote spot no one else was there except the warden who was expecting us thanks to a prior notification.

If you are sufficiently intrigued to visit this place note that it is only open at weekends. The now expected Spaghetti Bolognese arrived and we barely had the strength to eat it before retiring for a well earned sleep.

Day 6

The requirement for this day was to get to Cervinia to enable a return to Geneva over the following 2 days. The obvious route was to stick to the AVV1 as far as Paquier (Valtournanche) and then get the bus to Cervinia only 7km away. However the guide book indicated a time of 11 hours which was out of the question for us after the previous days *travail*. The next option which we decided upon, was a 4hr walk to Col Fenetre (2182m) and then 2hrs down to the road at Antey St. Andre (1074m) about 16km from Cervinia.

That was the theory at the time; in practice there was initially some confusion with the map.

Col Fenetre de Tsan is not the same as Col Fenetre (which had disappeared from our map down the crease on the page) and a change of direction from North to South was required at a place called La Sayvaz after 2 hours. Unfortunately there was no uniformity about the spelling which varied from Seyvaz to Servaz to Serva on our map and signposts, and later we found out that the map was published in 1973. Nevertheless we eventually arrived at the village of Mongnod which is sometimes referred to as Torgnon, which is the name of the entire area.

There did not seem to be any obvious way out of the village as a descent of 600 metres in 1 kilometre on a path which kept crisscrossing the multi zigzag road usually left us in someone's back garden. The place was eerily quiet except for the blast from the televised Italian Grand Prix coming from every window, and no one would leave this entertainment to direct two weary travellers. Everything comes to an end however and the bus stop at St. Andre provided a seat to rest our weary bodies. Not for long though, as an enquiry at the nearby Tourist Office indicated that the bus time table on a Sunday was different from the rest of the week. They were very kind and phoned for a taxi to Cervinia for us. Cervinia on a Sunday offseason was as deserted as Mongnod but eventually we found a hotel who condescended to rent us a room, and a restaurant which fulfilled our other requirement, as hotels are not interested in serving food for only 2 people.

This is the end of this section as the crossing of the Theodule pass to Zermatt and hence back to Geneva for the flight home does not form part of the Grand Tour of Monte Rosa. The next section had to wait another year.

Day 7 (year 2000)

This section starts in Cervinia where we left the Grand Tour the previous year. Arrival in Cervinia was similar to the departure, over the Trockenerstegg from Zermatt and down the lift system from Theodule pass and Plateau Rosa.

The objective for the overnight accommodation was the Albergo Panorama in a village named Cheneil close to Paquier in the Valtournanche.

The local bus (same one as that which we had intended to take the year before) carried us 7 km to a place called Losanche from where we expected to travel in style in the Telecabine "Cime Bianche" up the 600 m climb to Eullia where we would pick up the "Grand Balconey" footpath to Cheneil. Of course the lift did not work in the summer so we ended up on a different path for the next 5km until we arrived at the excellent Albergo in Cheneil (2105m). This Albergo has since become a centre for the study of Yoga with a minimum stay of 3 days but in the year 2000 it was a remote Albergo and we were made very welcome for our short stay. There is also a chapel nearby where people come to be cured of their ailments but as we were starting this stage of our tour we did not call in.

Day 8

Cheneil is 600 m higher than Paquier so we had a good start towards our next objective which was the Colle di Nana (2780m) and the village of St.Jacques (1690m) in the Vallee di Verra. The Colle was 5km and an easy 3hrs from our start with a further 5km and 3 hours downhill to St. Jacques. On arriving at St. Jacques we stopped at the first hotel for a late lunch time drink and snack, before deciding to continue down the road towards Champoluc (1572m) to get a better start for the morning, via the gondola up to the AVV1 path at Crest (1925m). The Albergo Monte Cervino proved a very pleasant small hotel and provided an excellent dinner and accommodation.

Day 9

Talking to the Hotel proprietor in St.Jacques, we found once more that the gondola lift to Crest wasn't working. We had failed to notice that it did not commence work for another 6 days! We walked back to the start of the AVV1 and changed our route to that over the Passo Rothorn instead of the longer Colle Pinter. It took 3hours to the Colle and another hour down to Sitten, where a short but steep telecabine took us down to Staffa on the road down to Gressoney. There was plenty of accommodation in Gressoney and we stayed at a small Albergo in the village.

Day 10

There is a ridge running South from Pyramide Vincent (4215m), part of the Monte Rosa massif, which separates the Valle di Gressoney from our next destination Alagna (1190m) The only reasonable route for our purpose was that over the Olen Pass (2881m). Fortunately at last a telecabine was

working, from Staffa (1850m) 4 km up the road from Gressonay, which took us to the Alpe Gabiet (2342m).

A 2 hr walk following the route of the higher section of telecabine took us to the top of the Col d'Olen where there are two large Albergos, Guglielmina and Vigevano. We did not stop for long and continued downhill for 7km and 3 hrs. into the village of Alagna.

For various reasons, lack of available accommodation in the village and bad weather, the next section of our Grand Tour had to await another year, with the exception of a short visit to Monte Moro.

Day 11 (year 2001)

This time we arrived in Alagna from Milan airport by train and bus, having taken the precaution of booking at the Pension Genzianella.

The next day was intended to be an easy one to Rima and St Guiseppe. It turned out to be a marathon of 10½ hours and almost resulted in an overnight bivouac at 2000 m.

Instead of taking the popular GTA route via the colle de Mud rated by CJ Wright as dull and uninteresting we chose the "most beautiful route" of the Bochetta della Moanda at 2422 m with a height gain of 1503m and height loss of 1282m. It started easily enough by crossing the river immediately outside of Alagna by a footbridge and following a track which appeared to cross everyone's back garden to a museum of Walser history, and we made the summit of the pass in about 4 hours. The weather had deteriorated to a heavy mist which reduced visibility and we had earlier decided to omit the secondary summit of the Passo del Vallarolo (2322m) (map and guidebook again differ as to spelling) and descend directly to the village of St. Guiseppe rather than the roadhead at Rima .

After leaving the summit, this meant finding the crossways track junction at Alpe la Plana (2061m) after descending for 30 minutes. Tracks hereabouts were difficult to find, especially in the mist, but the guidebook indicated there should be an isolated old barn at the crossways ,at which point we had to turn right and then left at a junction, avoiding path 98 to Vallarolo. It was complicated by the mixture of route markers which sometimes changed from the old 100 on our map to new 320 on our route and numbers 98 changed to 319. We were still looking for the barn 3 hours later after missing the route numerous times. We missed the critical marker and carried on Eastwards on a compass bearing, eventually running out of passable routes, being faced with steep drops in all directions, and we decided to turn back the way we had come, that itself, no mean feat by then.

Eventually we found the Alpe la Plana marker on a faint path downwards, which gradually improved to deliver us into the Nonai valley 600 m lower at about 5 o'clock with a further 1½ hours to go along the valley to St.Guiseppe (1118m), crossing rather unstable avalanche debris on the way. To add to our discomfort we could see a newly made up road on the opposite side of the river, by

then non negotiable. Nevertheless we staggered into the Albergo, ordered a litre of the most appalling red wine, and waited for dinner, which was just about edible. Not a good day!

Day 12

Hopefully today was going to be shorter and easier than yesterday. The objective was the old town of Carcoforo (1304m), where we had a reservation in the Albergo Alpenrose. Chosen route was via the Colle del Termo (2531m), a variant of the GTA. This necessitated a 4 km walk to the roadhead at Rima from where the Colle was supposedly only 6km distant. The snag was that the pass was 1400m higher than our start point, and reached by numerous zigzags including 65 turns in the last 300m (we counted them). We reached the exposed knife edge ridge in about 4 hours and didn't hang about as visibility was once more restricted. The guidebook indicated a barn at Alpe del Termo (2080m) which we could see vaguely in the distance, but could see no route to it except down a snow slope into a gully and then up a rocky overgrown spur. After about an hour we were having doubts about the location, but the barn had the name above the door to encourage us, so we proceeded along a track shown in the guide as "distinct" but in reality overgrown with thick vegetation head high.

Nevertheless several hours later we arrived at the roadhead outside Carcoforo having passed barns marked "Bella" and "Trasinerà" to reassure ourselves that we were on the right route, as it was clear that not many people passed this way.

We spent some time exploring the old town of Carcoforo looking for the hotel Alpenrose, until eventually we found it 100 m past the entrance to the town. This turned out to be a splendid recently modernised Albergo, where we had an excellent carafe of wine and ham and cheese toasties, with a good dinner later.

Day 13

Carcoforo- Bannio and Macugnaga

There are a number of routes out of Carcoforo towards Macugnaga but we chose the so-called easiest "Colle d'Egua", another 5 ¼ hour walk which turned out to be 7 hours. We had an early start at 7.30 today as we intended to catch a bus at Pontegrande leaving at 14.50 for Macugnaga.

An hour behind schedule for no apparent reason saw us at the summit of Colle d'Egua (2239m) at noon. Again poor signposting left us somewhat dubious as to the correct route and a meeting with the first fellow travellers we had met all week left us still confused, as they had come up from somewhere completely different to where we were going. Nevertheless the presence of a memorial to Alpini troops at Colle Baranca (1818m) as per the guide book reassured us and we reached the road at Brochette (1022m) at 1.30.

A 5 km walk to Pontegrande should have been possible in the 1hour-20min left to us, but after one hour of road walking the inviting sign of a Bar in Bannio changed our minds, so we decided to contact the Hotel in Macugnaga (20 km away) to arrange a pickup. This turned out to be more difficult than anticipated, as the Hotel had switched the

telephone to fax over lunch. The bar proved to be most hospitable and once a mutual language had been found with the bar keeper (French) he was eventually able to establish communications for us.

Two hours later our lift arrived (The hotel chef had eventually been sent in his own car to find us). We were not amused! But the beer in the bar was good.

Of all the hotels in Macugnaga we must have chosen the worst (3 star Hotel Dufour is to be avoided). A hotel keeper in Switzerland concurred with our opinion as he had stayed there once and was astonished that it could have 3 stars.

Day 14

Macugnaga- Saas Fee

The Mont Moro Colle (2868m) was the place where our tour the year before had ground to a halt with a snow blizzard and enforced overnight bivouac in the lift terminal building. This year the lift was working and early morning saw us disembark at 2800 m into thick snow although this time it was on the ground not in the air. With improved visibility we soon found the route to the Colle and were able to look down into Switzerland across snowfields in all directions. Fortunately there was the remains of a track heading in the right direction, and with the absence of any other walkers for guidance we set off downwards using our walking poles and ice axes for assistance. The effort of carrying the axes all the way through Italy proved at last worthwhile as without them we would still be on the Colle. An uneventful trip apart from a section where a rope had been left secured across an avalanched part of the route. To quote an old item in the *YRC Journal* –"I swung round a boulder by stepping over nothing at all".

Once we dropped below the snowline we met numerous walkers making their way upwards, we wondered how many would manage the roped section and reach the Colle. We reached the restaurant at the bus-stop for the Mattmark (2203m) reservoir in time for the 2.14 down to Saas Grund. At Saas Grund we climbed up the Kappellenweg or Path of the Chapels passing 15 little shrines built in 1709, up to Saas Fee (1772m) where we prospected the Hotels at the North end of the village (ready for a quick getaway to Grächen after a rest day), and selected the Hotel Etoile which turned out to be an excellent choice.

Day 15

Saas Fee - Grächen.

Heavy overnight rain had stopped by the morning and although thick mist still persisted we decided on the Höhenweg Grächen. This was a high level traverse keeping above the 2000m contour most of the way, and occasionally passing through corrugated steel tunnels to Hannigalp (2114m), followed by an easy walk down to the village of Grächen (1615m) where we stayed in the local Hotel Walliserhof.

A walk down to St. Nicholas the following day completed our Grand Tour of Monte Rosa started several years before, and then an uneventful return by train from St.Nicholas to Milano and flight to Heathrow completed our long journey.

CONGRATULATIONS MICHAEL

Michael Smith has just been elected our next President and well deserving is he, with his exemplary record with the Club.

He is a regular contributor to the journal especially with his recent exploits 'pulking'

Michael was of course my predecessor as Editor of the Journal.

In addition to this he has just become compleatist number 4911 of the Monros.



On having climbed his last Munro Michael reports:

"I finally completed the current list of 283 Munros on the 22nd October 2011 after almost 35 years of visits to the Highlands. Having taken so long over this round, the list had changed a number of times since I started so I also included all the 40-odd deletions from earlier lists and one which is ready to be added at the next revision. All but one were completed by June 2011 but to mark the final ascent I deliberately left until last the nearest mountain, Ben Lomond, to invite friends along to mark the event. Some 28 of us assembled at Rowardennan on the banks of Loch Lomond for a mass ascent. The weather was foul with strong winds threatening to blow some off the ridge, though even the incessant rain failed to dampen spirits and 22 stood round the summit trig point for a celebratory drink of 'bubbly' and a wee dram to warm the descent. That evening's meal at the Rowardennan Hotel, with five Munro compleatists present, gave plenty of opportunities to recall days out on the hills.

Those 325 hills encompass a tremendous variety: long lines of hills where you keep your height reasonably well such as the south Shiel ridge; plenty of groups with rough descents into deep valleys then discouraging ascents up the other side to pick up a cairn, another tick and make a round back to the car; dizzying drops along the Skye ridge; and, it has to be said, a few distinctly dull ones with scarcely a feature along the way.

Many of the mountains on my round were tackled in winter conditions, often on extensions to the Club's February meets. These outings used a mixture of camping, bothies, huts, a hotel on one occasion and, more recently, bunkhouses. Most of the Club's active members must have helped me get up and down one or more of these peaks at one time or another. Derek Smithson, Peter Chadwick, David Hick and Richard Smith are names that appear again and again in my log of ascents. I apologise for the times towards sunset when I pointed to another 'pimple' a little further on and suggested

Michael in action on a recent trip

that we could include that and still get far enough down before dark to make a safe descent.

While, navigation has generally worked out well I must apologise to David for the lack of concentration in cloud just south of the Cairngorms as we kept modifying the route to take advantage of the lie of the land before us and so crossed a valley only to end up on a long spur of the peak we had just left. Stoically he agreed to once again drop and climb to get us back on track then go on and take in another top before we cycled several miles back in the gathering gloom. That day, apart from the route finding debacle, was fairly typical of the days out in the few months mopping up the last few dozen Munros. A couple of other ones that stick in my mind are these next two.

Before Richard set off for the Hebridean meet we met up and had a couple of camping trips out. The second of these was in the Loch Monar hills and approaching from Craig in the north we camped tucked under the bealach by the Corbett, Beinn Tharsuinn. Our intention of tackling the five Munros over a couple of days was thwarted by stove failure. Instead, it made sense to polish them all off in a day then depart early the next morning in search of a good breakfast. Now, the advantage of a horseshoe arrangement of peaks, like these, is that one starts and finishes the round in the same place – unless one is camped on the outside of the horseshoe near its middle as we were. Walking round the outside of the horseshoe to start the ascent, completing the round and regaining the camp made a 14 hour day and rather more than a marathon in terms of distance - but, what a grand day of mountain scenery and distant views. It was also the day of a royal wedding and having found a rare mobile signal from the first mountain we were able to report on 'the dress' to the several obviously uninterested walkers we met. These included two lost chaps ascending Bideana' Choire Sheasgaich's craggy north side who had missed the scramble and were heading west.

The second memorable day was planned to be a three day bivvying round of Glen Affric mopping up after a recent winter visit there with Derek and David when we had made use of the SYHA's Alltbeithe room left open in the winter. Everything started off well enough though the pace was steady rather than brisk on account of the load. Up to Affric Lodge and ascend to the deleted Munro, Sgurrnan Lapaich, with its lofty level ridge to Mam Sodhailand then to Beinn Fionnlaidh overlooking Loch Mullardoch. Turning back to the col I met the first walker of the day and plunged down to cross the Gleanna' Choilich and plod up to regain the ridge at the far side of the glen. By now it had clouded over and rain was threatening from the west. Having ticked of the mountain there I decided to drop into the lee, rigged up a shelter and sat out the passing storm for an hour while listening to a radio play of Terence Rattigan's The Browning Version. In the thick of it, soaked, a concerned passing walker, at his second passing, enquired if I was alright. As the rain eased to drizzle I continued south with the intention of bivvying in the sheltered corrie. However, the corrie floor was continuous bog and I was well across to the east before I found an adequate spot to prepare an evening meal. By the time I'd finished the rain was lashing down and the prospect of spending the night there increasingly unappealing. Slithering across broken crags I eventually found a way over the ridge to descend in the gathering gloom to the now open hostel in the valley - about 18 miles in 13 hours. Overnight most of my gear dried and I could continue to tackle the peaks between there and Loch Cluanie to the south.

A common feature which made those and other days memorable was dealing with something not quite going according to plan. While there were many routine days on the Munros, there were plenty with challenges along the way. Staggering along near the summit of Schiehallion in swirling cloud and blustery stinging spindrift and taking a stride forwards only realise just in time that I was about to step into a gully. The crossing of one swollen stream to return from a bothy required the construction of a bridge from the bothy's ladder. A Glen Feshie summit was under so much snow that no sign of the cairn was visible. With the aid of GPS, David Hick and I crossed and re-crossed the flat ground and finally spiralled out from the supposed spot to be sure of including the summit.

The first Munro I recorded was on New Year's day in 1977 – Bynack More from the Cairngorm's Ryvoan Bothy where I'd spent the night with a large (in both senses) contingent of celebrating Scots who'd arrived at about 3am and were only just stirring when I returned in the afternoon. At 35 years ago, half a lifetime, this is no record. The most summits and tops in a single day was 16 on an April round of the three main summits of the Cairngorms. The years 1981 and the last two saw forty or more tops of mountains being tackled and there were lean pickings when the family were youngsters with no new ticks appearing between 1988 and 1990 nor 1994 and 2000.

A number of the peaks have been ascended multiple times over those years – not really in the spirit of Munro Bagging – and these include Ben Nevis, The Saddle, Bideannam Bian,

Ben Starav and several others around Glencoe and Glen Etive. There were a couple of peaks I duly trudged up but could well have done without; notably the late addition of Beinn Teallach, once the highest Corbett, now the shortest Munro. Just north of Tulloch Station it is normally tackled with nearby Beinn Chaorainn but I'd already seen to that one before Beinn Teallach's promotion. So five o'clock on a summer evening saw me leave Roughburn and splosh my way up the gentle boggy slopes for two hours in steady rain to touch the cairn and head straight back down again. The only entertainment came from the headphones radio and 'I'm sorry I haven't a clue' and the Archers heard while I was high enough to get decent reception.

I've already been asked countless times if I intend to do all the tops or the Corbetts.

These hold no immediate attraction. I'd rather explore further some of the more attractive Scottish mountain groups and take in some of the valley routes.

Having completed Ben Lomond I notified the SMC and was informed that I was number 4911 to have topped all the Munro summits. There are some names you might recognise: Darrel Farrant is the 127th on the Scottish Mountaineering Club list of Munro Compleatists and finished in 1974 (then the Donalds in 1978: they are the distinct Lowland Scots mountains over 2,000 feet), Rory Newman and Sue completed the round in the 1980s, Reg Hainsworth was 92nd, Eddie Edwards was number 589 and he was added in 1988; Peter Swindells 1274 in 1994; David Smith 1336 in 1994 plus the Furths (all the 3000s including Ireland) in 1996; Iain Gilmour 1586 in 1996; Elspeth Smith 2084 in 1999 plus the Furths in 1998 and Corbetts (2500 to 2999ft) in 2006; David Martindale 2220 in 1999; Tony Smythe 3453 in 2005, Sue Allen 3914 in 2007 and Phil Dover just a couple of months ago. I believe Tim Bateman also completed the round.

Among the group raising a glass on Ben Lomond that day were three making their first ascent of a Munro and others on their second so there may well be others to add to the list – and I bet they will do it in less time than I did."



Summit celebration on Ben Lomond: Brenda Bedford, Beth Marriott, Michael Smith, David Hick (behind), Helen, Fiona and Richard Smith, Iain Gilmour and some of the all-important trig point

OVERSEAS MEET

ALPS MEET, BERNEX HAUTE SAVOIE, FRANCE

29 July – 8 August 2011

This highly sociable chalet-based meet managed to top all ten of the 2000m peaks in the area and provided ample challenges for walkers and climbers alike.

Photos unless otherwise stated are by Michael Smith

The Bernex mountain area is defined by Lake Geneva to the north, the Swiss border to the east, the Abondance valley to the south and the Thollon, Bernex and Chevenoz villages to the west. It is comprehensively covered by the Morzine, Massif du Chablais 1:25000 map. After 11 active days in the area those attending still had plenty of other routes and peaks they would have liked to visit.

Tony Dunford lives in Bernex and generously organised and supported this meet.

Though easy to get to from Geneva airport, being just south of Lake Geneva, Tony made it easier for those likely to arrive late by collecting them from the lakeside. Throughout the meet Tony was tirelessly ferrying around those without cars, offering advice and dealing with any problems that arose. This must have been especially frustrating for him as a recently deteriorated knee condition severely limited his own participation in activities – indeed he was heading to the hospital for an operation as the meet closed.

Those attending the meet are grateful for his help and wish him a complete and speedy recovery from the surgery.

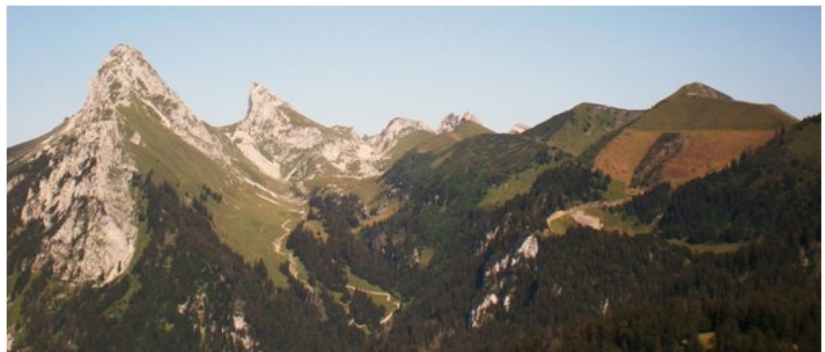
Richard Smith had been the first to arrive and had a day in the Creusaz hills including **Mont Cesar**, 1574m 5164ft, nearest Lake Geneva before the others arrived. Work commitments prevented his climbing partner, Chris Kirby, attending but Chris honoured his booking paying his share of the chalet costs. As all but the Norwegians and the President assembled Tony and his nephew, Will Dunford, shepherded us up to a gentle ridge where we split east and west to reach modest peaks giving inspiring overviews of the range from atop steep crags. On the descent a viper was almost trodden on – the first of three snakes spotted that week. Later, as the last three arrived, Tony and Nicole hosted an evening buffet and briefed us on the area's walking, climbing, shopping and gastronomic possibilities.

Who went where with whom on which day is too complicated to relate here. Instead outings on the main peaks are described in turn roughly from north of Bernex in an arc clockwise round to the southeast.

Mont Bénard, 1284m 4213ft, was included in a circuit by the two most longstanding members.

The **Pic des Memise**, 1674m 5492ft, gave a relatively gentle first day from Bernex and had the added interest on the ascent of a long ladder to bypass a cliff. This peak's popular grassy ridge gave grand views of Lake Geneva and the Dent d'Oche before a descent could be made traversing the flank through woodland. Some extended the walk by adding additional loops and another used the ski lift at the northern end to gain height quickly.

The **Dent d'Oche**, 2222m 7290ft, lies immediately above Bernex village, a tower of grey limestone. The usual route was taken first, ascending through forest to a high alp with cheese-making chalet, then up an increasingly rocky and exposed rib to the spectacularly perched CAF Refuge de Dent d'Oche. Below and above the hut are chains and cables to assist the ascent. From the satisfyingly small summit an airy traverse was made along the crest and flank eventually to a grassy col. Later two reversed the route but inadvertently in the cloud took more of a crest line than was strictly necessary and (intentionally) spent the night at the hut before descending to Bernex by a balcon route crossing below the northwest face from the Col de Rebollion to the Col de Nueva. Once back in the grazing alps, they found recent farm track improvements had left some kilometres of the path a quagmire of clay. It is a popular and impressive peak.



From left to right - The Dent D'Oche, Chateau D'Oche, Aiguilles Darbon and Pointe de Pelluaz

The neighbouring **Château d'Oche**, 2197m 7208ft, is well protected by crags. To wind a way to the top from the Dent d'Oche first requires a traverse under the crags towards a col. A rake leads to a sloping plateau and eventually the summit. Some members added this to their day on the Dent.



Peter Chadwick on the Pic de Memise's ladder

Mont Baron, 1566m 5137ft, was the right-most of the tops visited on the first evening of the meet. It and the other one, **Pointe de Pelluz**, 1908m 6260ft, were visited a number of times by various individuals either tackling a part of the GR5 or filling in the extra hour or two before descending to the valley at the end of a day. Starting from near Chevenox a long gradual ascent could be made following a ridge of alps and woodland over both these peaks before descending to Bernex. Solo, a determined member made an inventive descent towards the chalet which proved awkward and trackless.

Several parts of the GR5 were encountered above Bernex. While the path in its entirety runs from Menton on the Mediterranean to the Hooke of Holland, it is the early section in this area which appears to be most popular. One couple on the way to the meet attempted part of the GR5 further north at the Ballon D'Alsace and found a deviation, the map-marked GR5F, was not signed on the ground and the path soon faded out in woodland. However, they did find Joan of Arc *en route*.



West Peak of the Aiguilles Darbon from the north – traversed left to right – with Mont Blanc in the distance

On the **Aiguilles Darbon**, 2043m 6702ft, the traverse of the West Peak, 2030m 6660ft, provided the last climbing day for a threesome.

Michael Smith on the second abseil off the West Peak of the Aiguilles Darbon (photo Richard Smith)



By then the way up past the cheesery was familiar and continuing along the valley bottom the paths were forsaken at the Lacs de la Case to reach the grassy col marking the eastern end of this rocky fin. Being now in thick cloud, a few drops of rain made each of the three momentarily question the sense of embarking on a climb of several hours but none wanted to be the one to press the point.

The first pitch is one of the hardest; a 3c crack, and the young member was pleased to find old pegs ready to be clipped.

The next two pitches were followed through until they could walk and scramble roped. There were a couple of down climbs, one followed by a peg-protected traverse above a large wall then a descent of a slab with a large step down to a lower slab. A couple of short walls and a chimney added interest to the general scene of views of the larger peaks and wild country all around.

After almost 6 hours on the ridge the **Pointe de Darbon** was reached at the western end and an abrupt descent had to be made without delay if they were to make the final night's booked meal out.

After a short steep grassy slope, a 25m abseil reached a ledge by an overhang where started the two-rope 45m abseil to a nettle-covered ridge. After a short refreshment stop it was along to the **Col de la Case d'Oche** and straight down to Bernex.

The **Point de Benevent**, 2069m 6788ft, and the **Pointes des Pavis**, 2075m 6808ft, and the **Dent du Velan**, 2059m 6755ft, were combined with other nearby peaks in a 'mopping up' day by the President and entourage. The round gave them good viewpoints and varied walking. On a plateau they came across over a hundred contented bouquetin in a single herd.

Les Arêtes du **Mont Chauffé**, 2093m 6867ft, above Abondance were circumnavigated clockwise by two while four left that pair at the first col and traversed the partly wooded dramatically narrow crenelated ridge to the east. The climbing the route was not well protected but neither was it especially difficult.

There was an abseil which we complicated by straying to the wrong side of a rib so initially missing the landing ledge. Regaining the route, a second abseil avoided a steep down-climb.

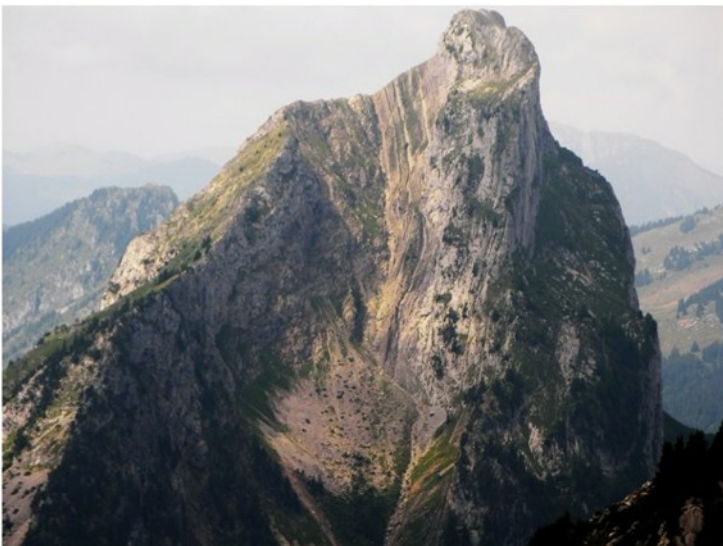
The route was scattered with edelweiss in full flower to the extent that it was impossible to avoid standing on some of them.

There were a number of notches in the ridge especially towards the summit end and these slowed our progress. The traverse took the rope of four about six hours to complete but that was not the end of the difficulties. A couple of steep drops and a short walk led to a shallow couloir or groove on the flank - a long scree of variable quality and depth.

All were glad to quit the scree and reach forest track.



Peter Chadwick ascending **Mont Chauffé**
with Kjetil Tveranger partly hidden



The far end of Mont Chauffé with the descent being
first left to the col then away from the viewpoint

The **Cornette de Bise**, 2432m 7900ft, forms part of the border with Switzerland and is the highest in the area. It was left until the end of the meet when most had departed and the Smiths started a three-day traverse of the area first crossing this peak and descending a complicated but well-marked route to the simple CAF Refuge de Bise. The final half-hour down to this hut saw the only day-time rain of the meet – a short sharp shower. Voles were spotted *en route*.

The **Pointe d'Arvouin**, 2021m 6630ft, and **Le Linlue**, 2093m 6867ft, lie fairly close together but with an impregnable crag blocking the frontier ridge joining them. From Abondance a fairly short and easy walk took five of us to a pretty lake and farm then a less distinct path gained the ridge at a col with a large cross. Mild scrambling was needed to reach the rocky top and grand views of the vertiginous north face of the next peak. It was back to the lake and a short cut up a very steep grass slope for a few hundred metres which led to a ridge with family groups of bouquetin playing

on rock pinnacles close to the path. The airy summit again gave good views before completing the round back to the car.

There is more to an alpine meet than the efforts on the hills. The spacious chalet just outside Bernexat Les Faverges, would have slept twelve and had ample room for us to cook or barbecue, eat then sit in comfort together. All the catering was communal and it worked out well. We each contributed 128€ (£1≈1.2€) for the accommodation and 45€ for the food including drinks.

Les Gorges du Pont du Diable (collapsed but suspended boulders across a deep narrow gorge) was a popular outing for a half day perhaps an hour away on the road to Morzine.

Nearer, at Chatel d'Abondance, a relatively new crag-crossing roadside *via ferrata* kept the Smiths amused for a few hours.

On the last evening we were all together, Tony and Nicole had organised a grand buffet meal at a local restaurant within walking distance of the chalet and thoughtfully downhill on the return leg. It was their music night and as the evening progressed with the other clients we were all clapping, dancing and joining in the choruses of I know not what. After a long day on the hill, a large meal with endless wine included, the energetic dances in particular were a challenge.

Alpine meets were camping meets for many years though sites were generally busy and facilities overstretched. Two years ago the meet was mainly hut-to-hut with only occasional use of a valley base and that arrangement worked for traversing an area of high peaks. This year the meet was chalet-based and that worked well as all the peaks were achievable as day trips from the roadheads. The chalet made the meet more sociable, cooperative and comfortable besides making the domestic side of things so much easier. Having two (three including Tony's) cars available helped everyone get to sensible starting points and made shopping easier – seven people eating well need a lot of supplies. Finding the right style of accommodation for the particular area and activities is important for a successful meet.

Attending were:

The President, Peter Chadwick

Tony Dunford

and Will Dunford (day visitor)

Jack Short

Michael

and Helen Smith

Richard Smith

Kjetil

and Ann-Karin Tveranger



A well exercised and well fed party on the last evening: Peter Chadwick and Jack Short in the front and behind, Tony Dunford, Helen and Michael Smith, Kjetil and Ann-Karin Tveranger, Nicole Mainaud and Richard Smith (standing)
(Photo Tony Dunford)



The chalet, inside photographed by Jack Short



A portable distillery recently outlawed but used for a long time on local farms to avoid the prohibition on distilling on private premises
(Jack Short)



Above - Via ferrata busy with a children's group – the 'pont' under the overhang is about 20m up

Right - Bouquetin

Edelweiss on Mont Chauffé



CHIPPINGS



READY TO RUMBLE

Recent discoveries are showing just how dramatic is the Rumble Room.

In 1998, while mapping Rumbling Falls Cave in eastern Tennessee, surveyors discovered this chamber that turned out to be the largest cave room in the eastern U.S. and the second largest in the country. Last year, when a sewerage plan threatened to alter the subterranean ecosystem, the cave's existence was finally made public. and photographs released mean that for the first time, everyone could see the immensity of the room.

The entrance to Rumbling Falls Cave is half way up a modest mountainside showing no obvious promise but, once inside, there is an 80-foot pit.

Crawling upstream from there, you are faced with descending a powerful waterfall. There follows 500 feet of torturously narrow passage, then you step over a boulder and the floor drops into a black void and even lamps cannot show the floor 200 feet below.

The 'Room' is probably badly named as its sheer size makes the word room an understatement. The floor area is of at least 4 acres!

Ed.

TIERRA DEL NIEVE E HIELO

This land of snow and ice is one of the most unfortunately named, presumably because of volcanic activity.

Tierra del Fuego as it is actually called, or Land of Fire, is the archipelago at the southern tip of South American across the Strait of Magellan. The archipelago consists of one major island, the Isla Grande de Tierra del Fuego which is split between Chile and Argentina and a number of smaller islands down to Cape Horn. The Darwin Range on the main island has always been a severe challenge.

The highest point on the Darwin Range is Mount Darwin so remote that no one can actually agree its height but it certainly tops 8000 ft. In this time of satellites there must be a definitive answer but several different ones are quoted.

The first person known to have climbed this and the other two high peaks of the range was Eric Shipton in 1961 but despite numerous attempts nobody had succeeded in crossing the entire range until a French military team this autumn, after a year training on Mont Blanc for the challenge.

The range contains many glaciers that reach the ocean and the 112 miles range is topped with an extensive ice field full of hazards which have stopped previous attempts.

The team finished their epic early in October having spent most of September fighting their way across from west to east.

On their return they talked of snow, gales and fog and falling seracs, avalanche threats and deep crevasses hidden by the mantle of snow. By way of respite on two of the 29 days the sun actually put in an appearance. Not bad considering that the area has an average of 250 days rain per year

They were of course in the Furious Fifties with the strong westerlies that occur between the latitudes of 50° and 59°, and have been the downfall of many ships.

They were pulking and carrying their own bodyweight (about 12 stones each). Despite this they did not take the 'easier' options and did climb Mt Darwin en route.

Ed.

LANCASHIRE

The other vanishing county

In the days of my youth Lancashire was a county of considerable size and stature. It is indeed the County Palatine and the Monarch is the Duke of Lancaster.

Speaking as a Lancastrian, we have been being cut down to size for some time, losing chunks to Manchester and Merseyside and all of Furness to Cumbria. Traditionalists were not happy with this nor that Cheshire was creeping over the Mersey. But the biggest insult was the extension of Yorkshire over the Pennines.

To add further insult to injury what they could not gain by boundary changes they now seek to influence by administrative responsibility in that after lengthy consultation The Yorkshire Dales National Park is to expand to take in a large area of northern Lancashire.

Few of us would disagree with the plan to create a continuous band of protected land across the north of England but the decision to see the boundaries of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Lake District National Park being extended so that they meet on either side of the M6 is not entirely welcome. Many of the local authorities in the area have objected to the plans, expressing fears it will add extra layers of bureaucracy which it will; but in their internal debates a number have apparently said they do not wish to lose some of their authority - turkeys do not vote for Christmas.

Cost considerations have ruled out the creation of a new park to bridge the gap between the two existing parks and whilst the extension to the Lakes is broadly accepted the extension of the YDNP is a different matter.

The plans will see 30 per cent of the Yorkshire Dales National Park being made up of land in Cumbria with parts of Lancashire in particular the Leck Fell area, also being incorporated into the park.

Strangely whilst Lancastrians object to becoming part of the YDNP some Yorkshire folk claim that the increase in size will dilute the unique character of the Yorkshire Dales which despite their name are by and large very rugged and very

hilly; the areas to be added being of a different character. Strange bedfellows!

As consultations have rolled on the biggest issue left on the table was in naming the new extended entities.

Ideas floated include calling the YDNP the Lancashire and Yorkshire Dales National Park but then, given Cumbria's involvement, the Pennine Dales National Park or just the Dales National Park. A popular concept was that whilst the new areas should come under the control of the existing parks each extension should be given its own name within the park to keep its own sense of identity and that these areas could be marketed independently for certain purposes.

One idea for the Lakes extension would be to bring back the historic names of Cumberland and Westmoreland either within the name of the new park or as sub divisions of it. The park could in effect have three divisions if Furness was added to the mix and the Three Shires might again have some meaning

Ed.

NEW PROSPECT IN CASTLETON

Among the numerous YHA hostels the Club has used in recent years is the one at Castleton. Centrally located it was a bit noisy sometimes and was also a bit 'tired'.

There had been little investment in this listed building and the YHA had decided on a substantial refurbishment to bring the hostel up to standard.

I have also been to a number of seminars etc at the Peak District National Park Authority's training base at Losehill Hall just outside Castleton and had been disappointed to learn this excellent facility was to close.

Both situations have now coalesced into an exciting new project. The YHA has changed tack and has decided to move into Losehill Hall which has far more space and gives the opportunity to use the extensive grounds for activities, education and recreation. The new hostel will open in February 2012 after a major refurbishment partly funded by the sale of the existing building.

Ed.

NIGHTMARE OR OPPORTUNITY

The arguments about the new planning guidelines trundle on and as editor I was a bit reluctant to cover this issue as by the time we go to press any comment may be overtaken by events.

Nevertheless one area which does concern me and which in as far as we can, we should argue against, is the timescale of the process.

It relies on Local Authorities getting their acts together and acting fairly quickly, not something they are renowned for.

We surely cannot fault the plan to greatly simplify the present unwieldy and complex planning system and much of the intent laid out in the material produced sounds fine. It is, by implication, what is not said that is of concern. Even more problematical is the transition period which developers might exploit.

I do feel it important to allow local authorities and communities to have a say in planning matters, but again, they must be given time to produce their own plans before applications are entertained based on anticipated changes in guidelines.

Where any planning authority has not yet completed its local development plan, then it appears that applicants will almost certainly be given permission. Many planning authorities are some way from completing the bureaucratic multiplicity of stages of consultation needed to put local plans in place, not helped by their current straightened circumstances. Introduction of the planned changes too rapidly might leave a gap through which developers will stampede. I feel more time should be allowed to planning authorities before any changes take effect. A deadline will focus their attention but it has to be an achievable one.

The Framework talks of maintaining Green Belt protections and protection for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific etc., and sets out a new right for local communities to protect green areas of particular importance locally. This is exactly what we would all wish to see.

However it is what happens before the local authorities complete the exercise of creating their development plans which greatly concerns me. There is talk, that where plans are not in place or up-to-date, development should be allowed unless this would compromise the key principles for sustainability in the Framework, including protecting the Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is fairly vague and worryingly loose.

It hardly seems sensible or in the public interest, to allow short term development which would interfere with plans which in the most part are nearly complete, if not finalised

I am also concerned that the "presumption for development" will mean developers no longer have to justify any new building but that objectors will have to prove projects would be too damaging. Given the difficulty of small groups or individuals in funding major disputes through the system, this seems inequitable.

Conservation areas and historic sites must continue to be protected; England has a very special landscape, in all of which tourism is of immense value to the country. If unsuitable growth is allowed, countryside will become extended suburbia and the tourist income will be lost to future generations. It might well also leave towns as ghetto areas, only inhabited by those who cannot afford to move out, as has happened in much of the United States.

There has been a lot of scaremongering about the Framework which is still in the consultation stage and nothing is yet determined but it does seem that planning inspectors are already making decisions on the presumption that the suggested changes will come in. This is a worry as whilst I am not necessarily against most of the suggestions I am concerned that if local wishes are to play a part we should wait till those local wishes have been documented.

The absence of a local plan should not be taken to mean nobody locally minds what happens.

We must accept the need for more housing if the population is going to be allowed to keep growing at the current rate and the system could be simpler but I would wish that more thought be given to the actual transition period, so that local authorities can produce their plans.

Be in no doubt that if a door opens developers will jump through it. They already try and use loopholes in the rules and the failure to act by dilatory councils, to circumvent what would otherwise be reasonable objections.

As an example, one such situation, very close to home, is going through the system at the moment. A planning application for a gas production scheme near Thornton-le Dale has now moved on to becoming the subject of a public inquiry. The application is for a production wellhead in the North York Moors National Park at Givendale Head, with a gas processing plant just outside the National Park on the edge of Thornton-le-Dale. The application has been unanimously refused by Ryedale District Council, North Yorkshire County Council, and the National Park Planning Committee. However as they did not do so within the required timescale the applicant has gone directly for an appeal on the grounds of non-determination by the two planning authorities. Because they did not reach a decision within the set timescale, the company is in its rights bypassing the local planning authorities in this way which means that the final decision, after the public inquiry, will fall to the Secretary of State.

Ed.

GAPING GILL ARCHIVE - Jeff Hooper

Names of the men and women who appear in the YRC Journals Vol.1 1899 to Vol. 8 1954, in articles referring to the YRC exploration of Gaping Gill followed by Members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science who descended Gaping Gill 3-4 September 1927

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Adams, D | 20. Boyes (Mrs) |
| 2. Addyman, E. T. W | 21. Brindle, D |
| 3. Addyman, O. J. | 22. Brodrick, H. C. |
| 4. Appleyard, J. C. | 23. Brown, David |
| 5. Barran, A, | 24. Brown, W. V. |
| 6. Barran, junior | 25. Buckley, F. |
| 7. Barran, Mrs A. | 26. Buckley, J. |
| 8. Barstow, F. H. | 27. Buckley, J. H. |
| 9. Bassett, Dr H. | 28. Burrow, C. E. |
| 10. Bellhouse, H. H. | 29. Burrow, D. |
| 11. Birkbeck, J. | 30. Calvert, E. |
| 12. Booth, (Miss) | 31. Chadwick, R. A. |
| 13. Booth, F. | 32. Chappell, |
| 14. Booth, H. | 33. Chubb, C. |
| 15. Booth, Long | 34. Clarke, |
| 16. Booth, T.S. | 35. Clarkson, W. |
| 17. Botterill, Arthur | 36. Collie Dr N. |
| 18. Botterill, Fred | 37. Constantine, F. |
| 19. Botterill, Matt | 38. Coulton, J. |

39. Cuttriss, S. W.
40. Dalton, H. E. J.
41. Davidson, J. M.
42. Devenish, H. P.
43. Dwerryhouse, A. R.
44. Ellet, F.
45. Ellis, J. D.
46. Farrer, R. J.
47. Firth, J.
48. Frankland, C. D.
49. Gaunt, A.
50. Gray, T.
51. Green, J. A.
52. Greenwood, W. H.
53. Hall, A. A.
54. Harrison, H.
55. Hastings, C.
56. Hazard, J. de V.
57. Hill, C. A.
58. Hilton, J.
59. Holden, B.
60. Hollis, E.D.
61. Holtzmann, F.
62. Horn, A. E.
63. Horn, L.
64. Horsell, F
65. Hudson, G. L.
66. Hughes, Prof.
67. Ireland, E.G.
68. Johnson, L.E. (Miss)
69. Kendall, P. F.
70. Kinnaird, F. D.
71. Lamb, P.
72. Leach, F.
73. Ledgard, W. G.
74. Lovett J
75. Lovett Dr T.
76. Lowden, A. S.,
77. Lowe L. A.
78. Lowe, G. T.
79. Lund, P.
80. Mallinson,
81. Martel, E-A.
82. Mason, B.
83. Moore, Leonard
84. Moore, Lewis
85. Newbould, W. W.
86. Parker, G. W. B. W.
87. Parsons, W.
88. Payne, F.
89. Puttrell, J.W.
90. Ramsden, W.
91. Richardson,
92. Roberts, E. E.
93. Robinson, P.
94. Rule, A.
95. Ruston, A. G.
96. Scovell, G.
97. Scriven, C. A.
98. Seaman, J. F.
99. Seatree, G.
100. Simpson, W.
101. Slingsby, (Miss)
102. Slingsby, L.
103. Slingsby, W. C.
104. Smith
105. Smith, R.
106. Smith, W. P. Hasket
107. Stembridge, H.
108. Sykes, E. P.
109. Tallon, A.
110. Taylor, H. B.
111. Thomas, J. S.
112. Thompson, H. W.
113. Waterfall, A
114. Waud, W. E.
115. Wharldall, R. B.
116. Whitaker, S. H.
117. Wilkinson, B.
118. Williams, S.
119. Williamson, H.
120. Wingfield, C. R. B.
121. Woodhouse, H.

1. Appleton, Dr C.
2. Appleton, Miss E.
3. Appleton, Miss M.
4. Bacon, Miss G.
5. Bailey, Miss D.
6. Barker, Miss M.
7. Barton, G.
8. Barton, Miss
9. Bulsara,
10. Butler.
11. Childs, C.B.
12. Curtis. Prof.
13. Donald, M. H.
14. Edgerton
15. Evans, S.W.
16. Flint, H.T.
17. Gough, Miss J.
18. Gough, Miss M.
19. Harper, W.P.
20. Hodge, E. W.
21. Hori, T.
22. Ingold, Prof. C. K.
23. Jones, Miss C.M.
24. Mackey
25. Maunsell, F. G.
26. Parkin, John
27. Parkin, Mrs John
28. Reynolds, J. H.
29. Shotton, F.W.
30. Smith, A.
31. Thouless, Dr
32. Turner, F. C.
33. Walmsley, Miss G.
34. Williams, J.B.
35. Woods, F.C.

The weather they had to contend with—
WHITSUNDAY WEATHER AT GAPING GILL 1903-38

YEAR	DATE	WEATHER
1903	MAY 31	Downpour after long fine spell. Sat. fine a.m., p.m. thunderstorm threatened.
1904	MAY 22	Jockey Hole. No mention of weather so it must have been fine.
1905	JUNE 11	Pillar Pot. No mention of weather so it must have been fine.
1906	JUNE 3	Fine. Unprecedented floods previous week or two.
1907	MAY 19	Arctic. Sleet, snow and showers.
1908	JUNE 7	Some rain.
1909	MAY 30	Pouring rain after long fine spell, deluge. GG in flood. Sunday bright and clear.
1910	MAY 15	Weather good.
1911	JUNE 4	Glorious weather; long dry spell.
1912	MAY 26	One of the few dry weekends in the early part of the Summer.
1913	MAY 11	Less favourable weather than usual.
1914	MAY 31	Unpromising
1915	MAY 23	
1916	JUNE 11	
1917	MAY 27	
1918	MAY 19	
1919	JUNE 8	Perfect.
1920	MAY 23	Four glorious Whit days-Summer flamed and died.
1921	MAY 15	On the whole fine.
1922	JUNE 4	Hot May; good weather.
1923	MAY 20	Succession of storms. Snow in London on May 12.
1924	JUNE 8	Rain May 25. June 1, storm two inches of rain in Leeds. Fri.6 June, heavy rain, Sat. misty and showery start, heavy rain later. Sun. rain and flood. Mon. uncertain.
1925	MAY 31	Wet fortnight before, and Friday night, steady improvement after.
1926	MAY 23	Fine weather.
1927	JUNE 5	Heavy rain.
1928	MAY 27	No comment.
1929	MAY 19	Glorious weather.
1930	JUNE 8	Ideal camping weather.
1931	MAY 24	Heavy rain Friday; showery, Saturday; Monday miserable & unsettled.
1932	MAY 15	Forty-eight hours rain finished Friday a.m. Severe storms Sunday a.m. and night.
1933	JUNE 4	Best ever remembered. Glorious sun and heat.
1934	MAY 20	Before Whitsun, wet and cold, Friday dreadful day. Sat a.m. bad, p.m. better. Sunday very misty.
1935	JUNE 9	Whitsunday the only fine day.
1936	MAY 31	Heavy rain Sat. a.m. cold NE wind.
1937	May 16	Heavy rain and low cloud on May 12.
1938	JUNE 5	Rain at nights.



SUI

We have reciprocal journal arrangements with The Spelological Union of Ireland and I can commend their web site to you. www.caving.ie

Should you ever wish to get deeper I do have access to their members' area but as my password is linked to my email address, I cannot provide this link to the rest of the membership.

Roy Denney

THREE COUNTIES POT?

During November when most of us were celebrating an earlier attempt to blow up parliament, cavers were blowing their way into history.

It finally became possible to go down a hole in Yorkshire travel below Lancashire and emerge in Cumbria. Whilst in part due to changes in county boundaries it is nevertheless a break through of resounding consequence.

The previously separate cave systems of Boxhead Pot and Notts Pot now make up a continuous 70 mile route under the hills of northern England

Harnessing the power of natural underground water sources through a hose to blast away the mud and rock that was hiding the final linking passage, 30 entrances have now been joined. Quite how useable the link is yet I am not sure but it is a momentous milestone in cave exploration.

Back in the 1920s it was first suggested that the three areas were possibly linked underground and cavers have been searching, digging, blasting and drilling ever since.

Ed.

REVIEWS

CAVES OF LEBANON

Rena Karanouh and Issam Bou Jaoude

Our friends in Lebanon have just published a book which will be fascinating to all cavers. As far as is known this is the first ever book of caves in that country.

The book outlines the relationship between cave discovery and the history of the Lebanon and describes why it is so rich in caves. The book not only covers interesting facts and shows several photographs but also documents the caves historical and geological significance.

The caves are set out in accord with their relationship to each other by way of geology, hydrogeology and topography.

There are several sections including:

The 34 caves of Central Mount Lebanon

30 of Northern Lebanon

11 of the Mount Lebanon Plateau

8 in the Anti-Mount Lebanon, 11 in the Bekaa Valley

8 in South Lebanon and 6 in Chouf

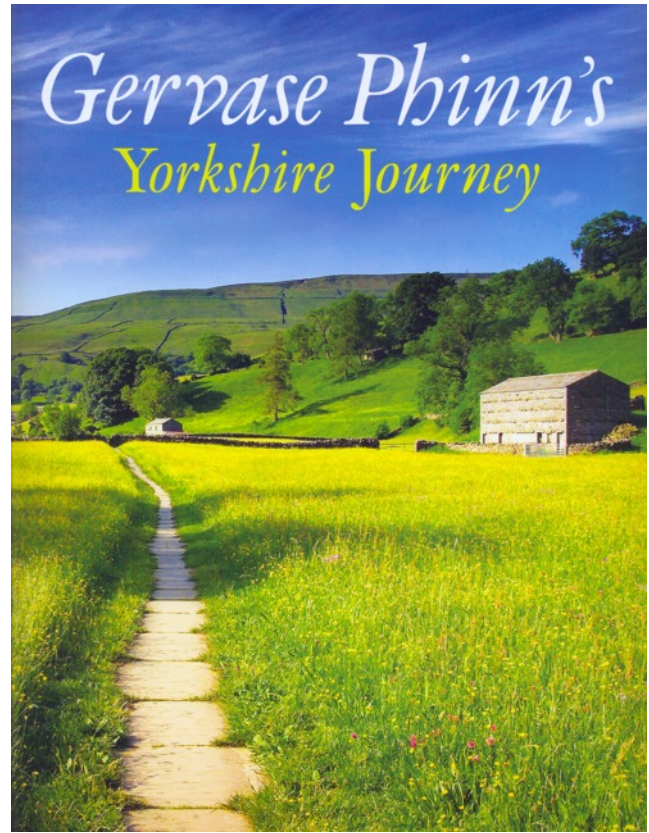
I have not yet been able to determine whether the book is available in the UK but the authors can be contacted on;
rena.karanouh@gmail.com
or iboujaoude@gmail.com

Ed.

GERVASE PHINN'S YORKSHIRE JOURNEY

ISBN-13 978-1855682788 Cover Price £17.99

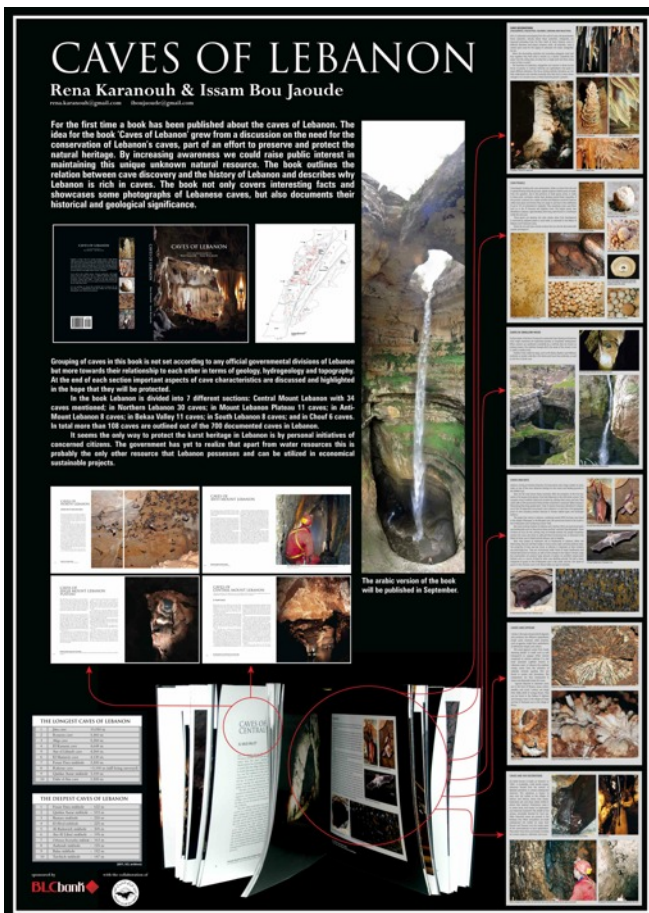
Published by Dalesman www.dalesman.co.uk



In the authors own words this book represents his personal tour of places and buildings which have meant a great deal to him, with the abbeys and churches, castles and museums, parks and holiday resorts in a sense defining his childhood. Some are little known and rarely visited."Their story deserves to be told."

A natural raconteur, Gervase has also been described as one of Britain's best-loved comic writers and certainly has many very entertaining books to his credit. He leads a very full and busy life, teaching, lecturing and directing courses throughout the country and abroad. He is also an occasional poet and is in constant demand as a public speaker. Along the way he has been a school inspector and educational consultant.

For years he taught in a range of Yorkshire schools until he became general adviser for language development in Rotherham. He later moved to North Yorkshire where he spent ten years as a school inspector, an experience which has provided much of the material for his bestselling Dales books.



He now is a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, the visiting professor of education at the University of Teesside and an honorary fellow of St Johns College, York.

This book maintains his high standards and can be well recommended not only for its often, little known information and wry sense of humour but for the pictures included.

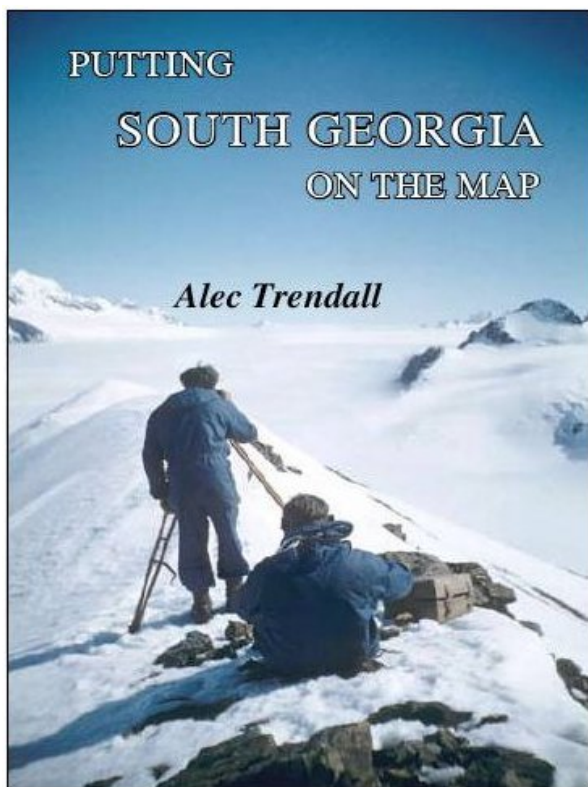
There are photographs by numerous people and watercolours by his son Matthew who is a renowned and award winning artist whose technique owes much to Japanese influences as well as his understanding of landscape as he lived in Japan for several years teaching watercolour techniques.

Ed.

PUTTING SOUTH GEORGIA ON THE MAP

Written, published and marketed by A (Alec) F Trendall.

ISBN 978-0-9870614-0-9 for a hard cover -1-6 for a soft cover. First Published 2011.



The title of this excellent book begs the question why was it necessary to put South Georgia on the Map?

You will find the answers in the book but here is a flavour to whet your appetite.

The map, not a map of the world, the literary map perhaps, is a map with the undistinguished and almost unidentifiable

title DOS 610. DOS is the abbreviation for Directorate of Overseas Surveys, 610 the number of the map issued in 1958, all can be forgiven with a beautifully produced map.

For 46 years DOS 610 was used by all who went to South Georgia- whalers, sealers, geologists, zoologists, naturalists, administrators, mountaineers and tourists - Argentinean and British soldiers, sailors and airmen during the Falklands conflict of 1982. But a few of the thousands who used this map had any idea of how or why it was produced. This book is the story of a disparate group of men who made the map largely without payment or thanks, out of a sense of adventure and enthusiasm. Alec Trendall was one of them.

Open the book and on the flysheet a photograph of the bronze bust of Duncan Carse, on the next page the alternative title for the book 'Duncan Carse's South Georgia Surveys 1951-1956.

This book puts this endeavour onto the literary landscape. Carse started the work on a book, but lost interest, these manuscripts and his autobiographic manuscripts remain unpublished. The need for a proper record of the endeavour was forgotten until 2002, this work by Trendall and others benefited from the long delay.

A sledging and survey account of 3 expeditions to map the interior of an island, which that time had no commercial interest, would have had little appeal to readers. Alec Trendall has had access to the personal journals and photographs of the expedition members, the inclusion of private comment and observation has transformed the appeal of this book. 98 photographs on 216 pages nearly all directly associated with the text maintain your interest.

The diaries and journals examine in some detail the leadership of Duncan Carse, his aspirations to lead the forthcoming Trans Antarctic expedition and his disappointment when the role was given to Sir Vivian Fuchs.

Alec Trendall offers the reader a bonus not to be missed. Tucked away on the last 3 pages, entitled Appendix 4, is a definitive examination of Shackleton's route across South Georgia in 1916.

There is longstanding and continued interest in this historic, but in detail poorly recorded, crossing of South Georgia.

The author, having been there, having access to information from diaries, letters and on-the-ground opinion from modern day travellers, includes a map suggesting the route taken by The Boss, Worsley and Crean.

The map was updated in 2004, using Landstat satellite technology endorsing the accuracy of the original survey work, without the hardship of early Antarctic travel and exposure to the fine line between success and disaster.

Should you have the opportunity to visit South Georgia I recommend you read this book before you go and take it with you.

Alan Linford



NATURAL HISTORY SNIPPETS

WILDLIFE, ECOLOGY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



DEER

Deer, after being hunted to the edge of extinction in the 18th century, have recovered their numbers to levels not seen in Britain for 1000 years. So many now roam the countryside that they have become a real menace.

Herds are browsing through undergrowth in important woodland habitats, threatening many rare species like nightingales, dormice and bluebells. They destroy thickets of bramble and honeysuckle where many birds nest; they denude the woodland floor, removing plants that butterflies and other insects need, thereby disrupting the ecosystem.

They have even taken to invading suburban gardens in parts of the south of England in particular and will do so increasingly as their own activity damages their natural habitat. Deer threaten the woods they need for cover because they eat the young trees preventing natural regeneration

Numbers have risen about two million since the introduction of new species like muntjac, fallow and Chinese water deer that are smaller and breed faster. With warmer winters, no natural predators and fewer people hunting numbers of native roe and red deer have also increased.

They often inhabit woodland and raid into nearby farmland and year-round crops also help them weather the winter period.

In the last journal we touched on the growth in tick-borne diseases like Lyme disease that can spread to pets and humans. Ticks are most often found where deer inhabit but another major concern is that deer also carry numerous cattle diseases like bovine tuberculosis and foot-and-mouth. Culling badgers but not deer seems difficult to justify.

A more mundane but still serious concern is it is estimated that there are 74,000 accidents caused by deer every year, of which nearly half are in urban areas.

There are calls for the reintroduction of wolves in the Highlands to protect what is left of the Caledonian Forest from the increasing red deer population but I cannot see that going down well in the London suburbs.

It is thought that approaching 400,000 deer are killed in Britain every year but it could be increased by 50% without threatening the species and wild venison could become a useful addition to our food supplies.

Ed.

FLUTTERBYES

Most of us are familiar with the RSPB Garden Bird Count each year but a similar annual survey of butterfly numbers is also done.

The results of the Big Butterfly Count 2011 revealed that the number of individual butterflies seen by each person counting the insects was down 11 per cent on last year. In cold, wet weather they are unable to fly, so cannot feed not to mention find mates and lay eggs. When added to the problems for woodland species caused by the increasing deer population it does not look very good

Common Blue butterflies were the biggest losers from the coldest summer for almost two decades, with numbers tumbling by 61 per cent in the count, which involved more than 34,000 people across the country recording sightings of 322,000 butterflies.

The charity Butterfly Conservation had expected a bumper summer for butterflies after a record-breaking hot, dry spring, but the cold summer with prolonged spells of rain hit the insects hard.

It was not all bad news for butterflies though, with perennial garden favourite the Red Admiral numbers almost doubling while Small Tortoiseshells saw their numbers stabilise after recent severe declines. The Small Tortoiseshells also experienced something of a north/south divide with three times as many of the butterflies recorded per count in Scotland than in England.

The Gatekeeper butterfly rose three places in the top 10 most commonly seen butterflies to top the poll with more than 52,000 spotted, but numbers of the butterfly were down 12 per cent on last year.

Other commonly recorded species included the Small White, the Large White, the Meadow Brown, the Red Admiral and the Peacock.

The last five years have seen butterfly numbers plummet to an all-time low, and that almost half of the 59 British species are now under threat.

Butterflies are also an indicator of the health of the wider countryside because they are so sensitive to environmental change.

Those moth species which were very occasional visitors are now spreading from the continent as our new weather patterns increasingly suit them.

Ed.

BLOT ON THE LANDSCAPE

According to figures produced by Scottish Natural Heritage the amount of land unaffected by visual intrusion fell by 3% to 28% in the three year period between 2008 and 2009.

There have been a number of major developments since then which have been permitted despite objections and it is thought it has probably dropped by a similar amount in the three years since.

The wilder corners of our land have come under increasing pressure from inappropriate developments such as roads, power lines, wind farms and industrial scale forestry and if it continues to vanish at 1% each year our grandchildren will be living in a much poorer place

It is easy to suffer from campaigning burn-out but unless we object to everything we feel is unjustified, given the long term consequences we will have no one to blame but ourselves.

The people who make these decisions answer to elected politicians who do need our votes.

As John Muir is quoted as having once said "Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress."

Ed.

SEE MANY SEA BIRDS?

You are lucky if you do in any great numbers. Certainly not in the dramatic colonies of the not too distant past.

When sandeels go missing it has in the past usually meant that the seabirds have been feeding well - they have eaten them.

Unfortunately they are missing today in part due to climate change and the temperature of our seas but also due to pollution by man .

As their numbers decline so do those of the seabirds who need them as a food source and numbers of seabirds have been declining steadily over the last ten years. Studies have shown that we have lost around 9% of our UK breeding seabird population, equivalent to 600,000 birds, in the last decade alone.

In itself this is a dramatic loss, but more worryingly, it is a warning of what is yet to come if we do not step up to the challenge of providing better protection for seabirds in UK waters.

Pollution in its broader sense, includes new marine developments, such as the laying of cables and pipelines, extraction oil and gas and other resources, recreational vessels such as jet skis and power boats, construction of wind farms and other renewable energy technologies, all of which can adversely affect seabirds if they occupy key sites, for example important foraging areas.

To date, we have a relatively good track record of protecting seabirds on land, with the main seabird colonies around our coastline designated as protected sites but, as their name suggests, seabirds spend most of their lives at sea and depend on marine resources for food.

The declines were particularly noticeable in Arctic Skua, Arctic Tern, Herring Gull, Shag, Kittiwake, Great black-backed gull, Sandwich Tern, Fulmar and Guillemot.

Predation by rats on some islands has also had an impact but they are being cleared where possible but mink on some mainland cliffs are also causing havoc.

Commercial fishing probably helped some seabirds that scavenge fishing discard but some fisheries have been closed down where sandeel in particular were being fished.

There is some hope on the horizon however. One of the more important and least commented upon aspect of the marine and coastal access legislation being enacted throughout the UK is the creation of a network of Marine Protected Areas in UK seas.

These are sites in which human activities are restricted to varying degrees and are a tried and tested means of safeguarding important habitats and wildlife not only within their boundaries nearby by having an influence beyond too, as burgeoning wildlife populations spill out into the surrounding seas.

However the network of sites already designated or proposed for designation around the UK does not include the full range of sites needed to deliver protection for all marine wildlife, particularly for seabirds.

England's breeding seabird colonies are protected on land, but few if any of the feeding areas used by our breeding seabirds at sea have any protection.

Ed.

WATERLANDS

When we visit the highlands in other than the depths of winter we oft feel inclined to bemoan the precipitation. Indeed much of Scotland could better be described as the waterlands.

Scotland's fresh waters, 30,000-or-more lochs and lochans and over 10,000 burns and rivers, are strong visual components in the landscape we enjoy and contribute strongly to the environment and the ecology it supports.

If you then add in the sea lochs and the thousands of miles of coastline water rather than mountains defines Scotland.

Remember this when next up to your waist trying to cross some torrent normally a gentle burn.

Ed.

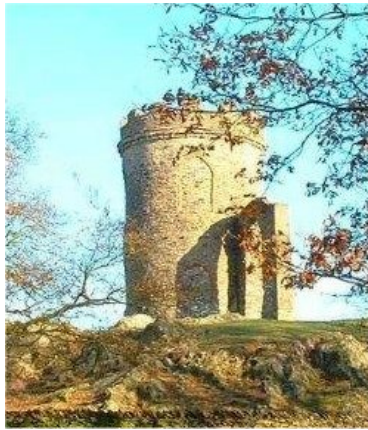
MEETS REPORT

NATIONAL FOREST August 9th - 11th

This now traditional mid-week meet was this year in the National Forest. The usual mix of cyclists and walkers turned out, staying in one of the new 'super' YHA hostels in the heart of this new forest in the making. 200 square miles of central England are being transformed by linking the Needwood Forest in Staffordshire with Charnwood Forest in Leicestershire and taking in parts of South Derbyshire.

The area provided good walking with surprisingly good views as we climbed over the various granite outcrops (the only remaining evidence of a long forgotten major volcano; one of the largest in Europe). The highest point is only just under a thousand feet albeit from a low start, but you can climb on and over several similar prominences around the original rim to make up a very good day's walking.

Five set off to walk these Charnwood Hills and were all pleasantly surprised. John Lovett remembered many of the locations having been there 40 years previously and managed a very respectable 10 miles including the ascent of the hill to Old John in Bradgate Park.



Old John Folly, Bradgate Park (Photo RD)

Peter Green and his guest, myself and Roger Dix added an extra loop of another 3 miles to take in a second dramatic vantage point in getting to the top of Beacon Hill. Peter's guest, Patrick, then also started reminiscing, when looking down over Loughborough where he had been schooled.

The walk started in the Chitterman Hills walking down the Ulverscroft Valley and from one vantage point the only man made object which could be seen in a 360 degree horizon was a distant radio mast. It was commented that it was amazing that this was only 5 miles from the centre of Leicester. It then went through the charming village of Newtown Linford and along the river Lin through Bradgate Deer Park as far as Lady Jane Grey's old house before striking up hill and past the Old John folly at the top.



The suggested cycle route was a figure of 8 made up with a loop of 55 miles out to and around Charnwood with its granite outcrops and another smaller one of about 20 miles round the country estates and newer woodlands to the west. Paul Dover set an early pace and was in fact the only one to complete both loops.

Both walkers and cyclists were quickly disabused of their thoughts that Leicestershire was flat. The first half of the Charnwood cycle loop went well with wind assistance but the return to base was a considerable challenge in the face of this stiff breeze. Thankfully most of the day was dry. Arthur had tackled the ride on a folding Brompton bike and was given a lift to start the circuit 7 miles in, and remarkably, despite two flat tyres he did complete the first loop. Richard Gowing managed the whole loop and we took pity on John Whalley by picking him up about 2 miles from base pushing his bike home with a flat tyre. Perhaps the comments of John Whalley sum up the cyclist experience excepting Paul who was well away "I set off alone due to trying to help WCIC with his tyre then somewhere near Worthington met up with Arthur Tallon mending a puncture on his bike and shortly afterwards we joined Richard Gowing and continued together until Measham where I sustained a puncture which we were not able to repair. I was able to make it as far as Donisthorpe by re-inflating the tyre at intervals before being rescued by Ian and Roy who were concerned about the meal timing. I was impressed with the area and it would be good to get closer to those rocks!"

Roger Dix, normally a member of the cycling fraternity, had actually elected to walk having decided that the challenge of getting his bike up and down the stairs at Birmingham New Street Station was beyond him. Getting to the meet at all using two buses and two trains was no mean feat.

With optimism rather than expectation the walk and ride had been designed with the same half way point against the possibility that all might meet up for lunch and to everybody's surprise it actually happened. Paul had gone through an hour earlier after a quick coffee but the walkers and the remaining cyclists were all there together. It was this point we learnt that bike problems had meant that Ian had not even started and had had to entertain himself by taking a ride on the remaining section of the Great Central Railway. By another great co-incidence however, as he drove back enjoying the Charnwood countryside, he picked John Lovett up for the last half mile of his walk back to his car.

The walkers all expressed delight in the area and whilst the cyclists could not get as up close to the features as did the walkers they must have been suitably impressed as John Whalley has asked for details of the walk so that he can return.

Peter, Patrick and I had arrived early and spent the Tuesday afternoon walking the area round the YHA. Paul and I walked a different part of the Forest for a couple of hours on the Thursday morning; starting out in heavy drizzle which thankfully soon cleared.

Substantial breakfasts were provided by the hostel and we took our evening meals at a friendly local 10 minutes walk from base. Amongst those who had to drop out of the meet was Richard Dover who had been called into hospital for surgery. He joined us for the Wednesday meal however, with chauffeuse (wife, Ann).

As the only cyclist who managed the whole route, Paul Dover details his exploits as follows

“Although 5 members intended cycling, only four set off due to Ian having puncture problems, on a two loop journey predominantly within the National Forest. The route started in a NE direction under a cloudy sky and with rain forecast and it was not far to the north. At Ticknall, we turned off the main road and enjoyed a pleasant ride through the substantial Calke Park and past the impressive Calke Abbey. Our route then followed a number of minor lanes via Worthington where it joined National Cycleway 6 to Osgathorpe. Here, I deviated (unintentionally) from Roy’s intended route and followed NC 6 through Belton and Shepshed along narrow and pleasant country lanes. I then turned south to rejoin the intended route to Woodhouse Eaves for the coffee break at the Curzon Arms arriving at 11.15 and departed at 11.45 by which time no one else had arrived.

The route continued in a south east then easterly direction through the linear village of Swithland with an amazing selection of very expensive houses, then over Swithland Reservoir.



By now the weather was delightful. Next came Rothley with more large houses and where the route turned south then south west.

On the outbound route I had the benefit of a substantial tail wind but the effect of the wind was only appreciated as I turned into it, the impact being to substantially to reduce the speed despite increased effort, even slight gradients required frequent use of the small chain ring.

Next came Cropston Reservoir and a very pleasant ride through Bradgate Country Park emerging at Newtown Linford



From here followed a twisty route on a mixture of quiet country lanes and busier roads and through the villages of Thornton, Battram, Ibstock, Heather, Swepstone and Measham. I stopped for a tea break at a Cattow’s farm shop which fortuitously coincided with the one sharp shower of the afternoon. I arrived back at Donisthorpe at 3.45 and after a debate with myself decided to cycle the western loop.

The wind showed no sign of settling and the outward leg was a battle through the pleasant villages of Netherseal, Lullington, Edingale and Croxall along minor roads with little traffic.

The route returned alongside the river Trent via Catton Park which had just hosted the Bloodstock Festival. Now with the wind on my tail it was an easy ride through Rosliston and Linton back to The National Forest Youth Hostel but before turning in, I cycled down the cycle way to Donisthorpe so as to complete the total route, a total of 80 enjoyable miles

The numerous junctions made navigation quite a challenge requiring frequent reference to the handlebar mounted GPS map with the intended route pre loaded though not always easy to read through the plastic rain cover! With hindsight, I mostly followed the intended route but with some variations both intended and unintentional. The return leg of the eastern loop partially followed NC route 63 but it seemed to be an amalgam of discontinuous stretches with signing which was not always clear. ”



Outside the hostel and ready for off (RD)

Attending:

- Roy Denney (meet leader),
- Ian Crowther,
- Arthur Tallon,
- Roger Dix,
- Richard Gowing,
- Paul Dover,
- Peter Green,
- Patrick Jeffcoate (G),
- John Whalley,
- and John Lovett

Visitors:

- Richard & Ann Dover

FAMILY MEET LOWSTERN

August 26 -29

This has been one of the most enjoyable meets that I have attended this year. A turnout of 33 people with an age range from 9 – 70+ just shows what the Club can do to pull people together and share skills.

What really made the weekend a resounding success were the few members who turned up just to help out and pass on their experience and wisdom to the younger less experienced people giving them the confidence to say “yes, I can do that”.

On the Saturday we split into three groups. Some went with Paul D and Alan L to the climbing wall in Ingleton. They took 3 family members with Martyn T in attendance. Alex L demonstrated his knowledge of the necessary safety and is now qualified to instruct other young people in the use of climbing walls. We hope that again on these events he will now be able to come and help with the younger people. Later we were joined by Denis Armstrong, 5 granddaughters, daughter and son in-law. The 3 youngest girls were given a taster on the wall and showed a natural talent that can be built on during future occasions like this. They all did lots of separate routes and some bouldering to boot!

Richard J, Tim J, Phil D and Michael S took a group of more experienced and older youngsters to County Pot They had an exhilarating time and all the youngsters really enjoyed the experience which shows that with Richard’s forethought to book a key, enabled this to happen. Michael S did a little exploring of his own around Eureka Junction, ending up in the Wretched Rabbit part of the system! It is a very complex system but all was well that ended well, and there was some good experience had by all.

John B took a smaller group of less experienced folk and the younger participants to Great Douk where the two younger members Oliver and Ben led the way. Surprised at this elevation of duty to joint leaders, they really shone and they all exited out through the crawl to Middle Washfold cave. John B did his best to dissuade them from doing this as he was not keen! But in the end relented and led them through. This group then travelled around to Kingsdale to visit the main chamber at Yordas and had a challenging scramble up the stream way to the middle and top entrance (which was dry) We then spent some minutes building a dam across the wet part of the brook before it sinks into the Yordas system.

As usual on Club meets the food and preparation was excellent and our thanks go to Evelyn and Phil Dover for a very fine spread, enjoyed by all.

Sunday came with plans to go abseiling on the crags above the Norber erratics. Every one set off on foot with the advance party of John Alan Mike and Tim to find the crag and set up the ropes. Alan knew exactly where it was and eventually found the right one after about an hour!



We had a low abseil for those who had not had a go before with the option to climb back up the crag, and a longer abseil for those that perhaps had a more adventurous spirit. Several enjoyable hours were spent by all up and down the relative cliffs, and those that were used only to indoor wall climbing found it an entirely different aspect to be outside on rock, with a different kind of exposure.



After this we returned to Lowstern where some departed for home with others going again to the climbing wall to build upon what they had learned.



Photos Paul Dover

This type of weekend is fulfilling not only for the families but also for the members that gave up their time to demonstrate their skills and introduce young people to the joy of adventure outdoors some for the very first time.

MEMBERS
Phil Dover
Richard Josephy
John Brown
Tim Josephy
Paul Dover
Alan Linford
Martyn Trasler
Ian Crowther
Michael Smith
Albert Chapman
Dennis Armstrong
ADULT GUESTS
Evelyn Dover
Clive Calmeyer
Bern Hellier
Katrina Devenport
Rachael Evans

JUNIOR GUESTS John Brown
Marko Vasilic
Charlie Young
Evan Calmeyer
Ben Maddison
Alex Linford
Louise Briggs
Jo Calvert
Oliver Devenport
Elizabeth Trasler
Mathew Trasler
Michael Crowther
Florencevan Bergen
Ella van Bergen
Lily van Bergen
Holly Whitehead
Beth Whitehead
Millie Whitehead

LOWSTERN - JOINT MEET

September 9-11

The Joint Meet, which now alternates between the Lowstern and Robertson Lamb Huts, commenced when three early birds arrived on Thursday.

When I arrived early on Friday morning I was surprised to see people breakfasting, but pleased to receive a welcome cuppa. However, the bonus was that I had a companion to walk with on the Friday. Paul D. and I drove to Gearstones for a wet circular tour via Nether Lodge, High Birkwith, Ling Gill, and Cam End. A trio of Wayfarers set off to Austwick across the fields followed by a further Wayfarer in an attempt to catch up, but to no avail. The trio decided to return to Clapham via Norber, but all met up later in the New Inn.

Bruce H. cycled from Lowstern to Clapham but via Slaidburn. An unusual route I think.

Messrs Smith and Brown explored a number of the less visited parts of Twisleton Scar before heading further up Wherside to identify a number of caves and potholes. They then joined the Three Peaks route to follow the streambed to Hurtle Pot, Jingle Pot, Weathercote Cave emerging from the graveyard.

Alan Linford prepared an excellent meal of corned beef hash which was enjoyed by all and followed by much socialising in front of a warm log fire.

Saturday dawned warm with a promise of much improved weather and a forecast of heavy showers. Our meet organiser spent his day preparing for the evening meal and yours truly did some drainage digging before meeting up with colleagues in Clapham in the afternoon.

Others ascended Ingleborough via Crina Bottom with four stalwarts returning via GG, Trow Gill, Crummockdale Head, Norber and Clapham. One took a more direct route.

However, Goredale Scar and Malham attracted five other colleagues who experienced rather slippery conditions in Goredale.

Ian C, dressed for the part as always, cycled locally. Bruce H. and Paul cycled via Austwick, Horton in R. High Birkwith, Cam End, and the Roman Road to Bardale Head. Then to Oughtershaw, Buckden, Kettlewell, Mastilles Lane, Malham Tarn to Sannat Hall Farm. Here Paul thought a "stunt" appropriate and somersaulted his bike over a large drop, sustaining a bruised elbow. Then to Austwick via Helwith Bridge. Not a bad 53 miles.

Alan and George took to bird watching at Leighton Moss observing Egrets, Heron, Red Shank, Kingfisher, and a Marsh Harrier.

The main body of the meet were joined by George Spenceley and his wife, Silvie together with five other YRC

members to celebrate George's 90th birthday. A celebration cake was cut and further snippets of George's past experiences enjoyed.



On Sunday Peter C. and Paul walked round Bordley on Malham Moor, and Mike S. and John B. climbed a handful of lower grade routes on Twisleton Scar's Cairn Buttress. Rain threatening they then walked from Leck Fell to Ease Gill and Gragareth.



Our thanks and appreciation go to John Brown who organized our joint meet and provided us all with excellent food.



Some stayed on, and on Monday two refreshed their SRT skills down Sell Gill.



On Tuesday Paul joined four Tuesday walkers on a circuit of Stocks Reservoir.

Photos Paul Dover

Mike Godden.

ATTENDEES

YRC.

Peter Chadwick (President)
Bob Ferguson (G)
John Brown
Alan Linford
Paul Dover
Martyn Trasler
Michael Smith
Ian Crowther
John Lovett
Harry Robinson
Albert Chapman
Tony Smythe
John Farrer
George Spenceley
Silvie Spenceley (G)
Mike Godden

Wayfarers.

Bruce Hassall
Steve Auty
John Jacob
George Chambers
Colin Smith
Graham Pennie
Russ Bloor
Ken Fyles

HOWGILLS AND WESTERN DALES

14-16TH OCTOBER

The meet was based at the Longrigg Centre just outside Sedbergh, which provided spacious accommodation and a superb view across to the Howgills. Despite a couple of members attempting to use the key pad code to gain access to a bunk-barn in a different location in Sedbergh where we had stayed a couple of years ago, the meet got off to a flying start with ten members enjoying a splendid dinner at the Cross Keys Inn at Cautley on Friday evening.

Saturday dawned without a cloud in the sky and stayed that way all day as members headed out into the hills to enjoy the sunshine and distant views. The President, Tim, Iain, Michael and Rich drove to The Street (between Cautley Spout and Ravenstonedale) and walked back to the Centre after ascending to the ridge at High Dolphinsty, then traversing Wild Boar Fell, Swarth Fell and Baugh Fell, checking out a cave on the col between the last two of those. Iain was bitten by a farm collie as they left the fell.

Separately, Mick followed Richard north into the Howgills via Ashbeck Gill to the Calf. Richard then headed west to Fell Head before returning by Cautley Spout (meeting John and Derek Collins on the way down) and the riverside path back down the Rawthey; while Mick descended the same route to the Cross Keys footbridge and returned via a traverse of waterfalls in Fairy, Taythes, Whinney and Nor Gills draining West Baugh Fell, passing through a large herd of doe-eyed alpacas at Ghyllas and back via the lanes to Longrigg.

Arthur and Derek started at Cautley and proceeded up to the Calf after admiring Cautley Spout, then NW along the broad ridge to Ullgill Rigg near Black Force, before dropping down to Howgill and the Chapel near Thwaite in the Lune, valley from where they followed a poorly signposted section of the Dales Way back to Sedbergh for a well earned pint.

Rob, on his first visit to the Howgills made for Winder, enjoying the many new views, continued to Arant Haw then Calder, and headed for the S end of Cautley Crag, traversed N and whilst crossing one of the streams, met Richard (J) coming back from Fell Head and returned together to Longrigg via one of the several bookshops and a nearby alehouse.

Iain walked the lower slopes of Baugh Fell taking in a number of becks, waterfalls and ravines visited by Mick on his return route as above.

Hilary, Albert & Rachel, Peter & Verity arrived in time for the evening meal. Hilary was fortunately accompanied by pate and home-made brioche, beef bourguignon and a large chocolate chiffon pie. Seventeen sat down to a delicious meal, which was much appreciated, rounded off with a couple of cave-aged cheeses.

On Sunday, the clag was down, but with the promise of some improvement Peter and Verity, the President, Tim, Iain,

Michael and Rich, repeated Mick's route into the Howgills and returned from the Calf and Cautley Spout via the riverside path back down the Rawthey.

Arthur and Derek parked at Rawthey Bridge and had a very wet walk across the moor to the waterfalls which were once featured on "Country File". I don't think Julia Bradbury would have enjoyed this walk never mind the 'skinny dipping'. The falls were fine, but to get anywhere near them required a wet greasy descent on steep grass and rock. Not very pleasant. We eventually crossed the stream somewhere near its watershed and followed an indistinct path back to the car. A completely different day to the Saturday!

Mick and Hilary also parked at Rawthey Bridge and followed the south bank of the river to Uldale Force which was found wet greasy and after crossing the river returned via Whin Stone Gill Bridge and Uldale House, reaching the car just as the rain started.

They didn't see Derek or Arthur though!

Attendance

Mick Borroff (leader)	Rob Ibberson
Derek Bush	Tim Josephy
Peter Chadwick	Richard Josephy
Albert Chapman	John Lovett
Iain Crowther	Arthur Salmon
Peter Elliott	Michael Smith
Verity Elliott (G)	Rich Smith
Rachel Evans (G)	Hilary Tearle (G)
Iain Gilmour	

DINNER MEET - GISBURN NOVEMBER 18-21

Early arrivers for the meet were mostly staying at Lowstern and a few got some walking in on the Friday.

Saturday turned out to one of those superb winter days with clear blue skies and wonderful views but despite this Richard and Michael Smith decided to go down Sell Gill.

Others did take advantage to walk the hills although it was of necessity a short day as we had to return to Lowstern by 2.00 to change for dinner and drive down to Gisburn.

Early starts did however afford the chance to take advantage of the weather. Speaking for myself and Martyn; we drove round to Stainforth and then walked back over the tops to Feizor and did not expect to be sitting outside the café drinking tea at 10.00 in our shirt sleeves.

We then walked round the quarry down and past Giggleswick School to return along the Ribble Way. Only about 8 miles but in glorious sunshine with great views of Penyghent in particular.

Having walked the area extensively over the years we had tried to find something different and we certainly got some different views of familiar hills.



Above a distant view of Pen Y Ghent
Below, Smearsett Scar



Above, Stainforth Force
Below, the pack bridge above the force



The AGM followed and then an excellent dinner at Stirk House with a presentation from Chris Brown our principal guest. Chris Brown, a farmer from North Yorkshire, did not start climbing until he was 40. He climbed the seven continents' summits to set up a workshop for the mentally ill, for which he was awarded an MBE

Sunday was a complete contrast - claggy near fog at times but at best dank and dreary if not actually raining. Notwithstanding this a good number of members and guests set off on a walk round Stocks Reservoir, at just over 8 miles I would suspect. It was enough on such a day and just over three hours after starting most were happy to head for home. A few stayed overnight but woke to a dim foggy morning and called it a day.

The walk round the reservoir was a bit of a surprise to those who did not know it - far from the expected sanitised tourist track along the edge it wandered into woodland and onto moorland and indeed the first 45 minutes we could not even see the water. It included some uphill stretches which were a bit of a challenge to some older members but there was a very welcome fishermen's café half way round. More tea was consumed.

Attending the official Sunday walk

Mick Borroff
Derek Bush
Peter Chadwick (President)
Roy Denney
Philip Dover
Paul Dover
Iain Gilmour
David Holmes

Gordon Humphreys
Rob Ibberson
Cliff Large
David Large
John Lovett
Arthur Salmon
Andy Syme
Michael Smith

Richard Smith
John Sterland
Martyn Trasler
Frank Wilkinson

Guests
John Barrett, Fell & Rock Climbing Club
Nick Edwards, The Wayfarers Club
Dennis Chapman, The Gritstone Club

BLENCATHRA – 9-11 December

As the darkness fell, the members scuttled into the warmth of Lonscale's communal room, as Peter and Alan busied themselves in the kitchen preparing Chilli and jacket potatoes, despite the challenges of the ovens. Plans were made, discarded and remade, alcohol was consumed and friendships were renewed. The views across the valley were crystal clear and the stars incredibly bright. Tomorrow looked good.

Saturday started at 7 for Aaron, Andy, David (H), Mike and Mick; earlier for Peter and Alan who were on breakfast duty. And at 7:45 the 5 plus the President set off for Hall's Fell to do the Blencathra, Great Calva, Skiddaw circuit. A light coating of snow, plus occasional drifts made Hall's Fell ridge tricky in places, all the more so with the wind which was biting cold and gusting at 40-50 mph. The views were also disappointingly white above 600m making the summit pauses limited to a quick map check.

Dropping down to valley the team met various YRCers trekking up to Skiddaw house and Ian & John aiming for Jenkin Hill. David turned south on the Cumbrian Way & Mike and Andy decided to skip the unappealing Great Calva and turned straight to Skiddaw. Aaron, Peter and Mike stuck to the plan. Another cold windy summit saw Andy & Mick back at 4, with Aaron, Mike and Peter arriving just over an hour afterwards.

Blencathra saw a number of YRC summiteers, with Richard (G), Derek (B) and Barrie summiting via Doddick Fell and Arthur and his guest Ray via Sharp Edge.

Did Iain follow the crowd? No he 'Did Knott' (and Great Calva).

Skiddaw saw 2 parties flirting with her, but both Harvey and a team of Rob, Peter and Pat sensibly opted for a descent

to Keswick. Rob, Peter, Paul and Pat returned via the old railway line; Harvey, who claimed he went higher, opted for the bus back to Threlkeld. Alan, Derek (S) and David (M) opted for a ramble round Derwent Water.

Saturday night's dinner started promptly at 7, despite some scepticism, and was a 4/5 course extravaganza. Duly feasted on soup, roast, mince pies & Satsuma's, Christmas cake (the best I've tasted in ages) and cheese. Members returned to the evenings drinking and reminiscing.

Sunday started damp, and a number of members decided, to slope off home. Iain, Frank and Rob did another circuit to Keswick; Mike and Peter walked over to Latterigg and back; Paul and Richard (J) did Skiddaw House. Andy and Mick abstained from cleaning and did Clough Head via Fisher's Wife's Rake. The committee meeting duly commenced at 2:30 PM, but with Arthur missing. He had set off with Ray to race up Hellvellyn, but lack of parking change forced then over to Dunmail Raise. It quickly became apparent that Dolly Wagon Pike was not going to be a quick enough ascent but meanderings and detours meant they were not back to Blencathra until 3:15.

Intermittent weather, wonderful food; another 1st class Christmas meet.

Andy Syme

Attending

Borroff, Mick
Bush, Derek
Chadwick, Peter
Chapman, Albert
Crowther, Ian
Dover, Paul
Gilmour Iain
Gowing, Richard
Green, Peter
Gumbrell, Ray (G)
Hick, David
Ibberson, Rob
Jeffcoate, Patrick (PM)

Jenkin, John
Josephy, Richard
Linford, Alan
Lomas, Harvey
Lovett, John
Martindale David
Salmon, Arthur
Smith, Michael
Smithson, Derek
Syme, Andy
Taylor, Richard
Wilkinson Frank
Wood, Barrie

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS - LATEST NEWS

FORESTS

The Independent Panel on Forestry has just released its interim progress report, outlining the Panel's views so far on the future of woodland and forests in England. The Panel was set up in response to the public outcry over the proposed sale of public woodland.

We must welcome the Panel's backing for public forests and for them to provide the same level, type and above all "gold standard" quality of access as today.

However not only must access be at the heart of the future of the Public Forestry Estate but I would contend should be at the heart of England's policy on the future of all woodland, very much as the Right to Roam Access provided on Mountain and Moor and as in Scotland which has open access to all woods, both private and public. Obviously we cannot treat all private woodland

as the same; there are vast differences between people walking in large scale commercial forests and small personal woodlands. Down the road I would also argue for the right to walk riverbanks and lakesides but one thing at a time.

The final report on public woodlands will be made to government this spring but the interim report is very encouraging.

The report says the Panel are working towards making recommendations that will increase the benefits generated from all forests in England – to the people that enjoy them, to nature and to the businesses that rely on them.

Of the woods which are not in the public estate, 80%, only about half of them are managed.

The Panel wants to see more woods created and more woods managed.

The report also makes clear that the Panel believe there is a role for a national public forest estate.

It also says how this tremendous asset is managed and used should evolve to reflect people's aspirations and wider challenges like climate change.

The Panel's chair, The Right Reverend James Jones Bishop of Liverpool, said: "Although our Panel was born out of fierce debate over the future of the public forest estate, what has become apparent through our work so far is that we must look at the future of all woods and forests, not just the one fifth managed by the Forestry Commission."

"Through the 42,000 responses to our call for views, the public expressed their passion for forests as a place of recreation, to connect with nature and as a vital source of resources.

These responses, along with the many people we have met on our visits, have helped inform our report."

The report notes that while looking over a landscape of different types and ages of trees in the Forest of Dean, the Panel were told this was "a political landscape" shaped by the national politics at the time of planting. The Panel has identified in their progress report that future forestry policy should reflect the economic and ecological timescales of woodlands.

Responding directly to one of the issues it was asked to address, the progress report states that the Panel sees a continuing role for a national public forest estate in England. The Panel sets out a broad vision of providing a wider range of benefits to more people, and will explore the role of not just the public forest estate but all woodlands, including those in other ownerships, in delivering more for society, the environment and the economy.

In speaking about the Panel's work over the next few months Bishop James said: "For now all of our work, especially in relation to the woods and forests outside of the public forest estate, needs further development in the run up to making recommendations in our final report next year. But as ever the Panel are dedicated to further exploring these emerging themes."

NATIONAL PARKS

Lakes to Dales Landscape Designation Project

Contributors to the consultations on Natural England's proposals to vary the boundaries of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks have now had the decision of the Natural England Board to set out the next steps and to provide feedback on the results of the further consultation;

The relevant Board Papers including consultation analysis and maps are at available if you want more detail, at the following web site

http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/about_us/ourpeople/neboard/meetings/september2011.

Results of the Further Consultation

The further consultation took place between 14th April and 1st July 2011. The consultation asked whether:

> the Orton Fells should be included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park,

> two areas should be added to the proposed extensions to the Lake District National Park, and

> five areas should be added to, and one deleted from, the proposed extensions to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

It also asked for comments on the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report and Equality Impact Assessment.

In total, 804 consultation responses were received.

The 'Orton Fells' question was directly addressed by 551 consultees. A large majority (475, of which 146 live in the Orton Fells) agreed that the Orton Fells should be included in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, whereas 57 consultees (of which 13 live in the Orton Fells) disagreed.

There was also some support from statutory consultees (Allerdale BC, Craven DC, Bandleyside PC, Grassington PC and the Yorkshire Dales NPA) but also strongly held objections (Cumbria CC, Eden DC, Asby PC, Crosby Ravensworth PC, Hawes & High Abbotside PC, Gosforth PC).

The Lake District NPA objected on the basis of its view that the Orton Fells should form part of their National Park. There were also a number of 'in principle' objections (considered below), which, though they did not refer specifically to the Orton Fells, can be taken to be objections to inclusion of the Orton Fells in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

With regard to detailed boundary proposals, the results suggest very strong support for the additions to the Lake District National Park and generally to the additions and deletion considered for the Yorkshire Dales National Park, with relatively few people objecting. This pattern is also true for residents of the relevant extensions to which these additions and the deletion relate. In relation, specifically, to the additions to the proposed western extension to the Yorkshire Dales, there is very strong support from the majority of consultees overall, but also a substantial number of objectors, many of whom are local to the area.

Relatively few statutory consultees addressed the boundary questions in detail, but we have summarised

comments from all consultees in the Natural England Board paper and annexes accessible from the link given above.

Many consultees also made additional suggestions to further change the proposed National Park boundaries. The majority of these suggestions had also been raised during the previous consultation.

The most substantial of these are:

objection to the proposed western extension to the Yorkshire Dales; proposals for the inclusion of areas to the north of the Orton Fells (around Reagill and Sleagill), Tebay village and the Hutton Roof area in the Yorkshire Dales

and proposals to include an area to the north of Sizergh Castle in the Lake District.

Many consultees, and in particular statutory consultees, focussed on wider issues of principle regarding the desirability of National Park designation, rather than the specific questions asked in this consultation.

The two National Park Authorities, Allerdale BC, Craven DC and Lancaster CC were broadly supportive.

South Lakeland DC and Copeland BC adopted a neutral stance, although the former raised detailed concerns.

Cumbria CC, Eden DC, Lancashire CC, North Yorkshire CC and Richmondshire DC objected to the proposals in their entirety.

Parish Councils also provided a range of views. Most of these issues had already been raised during the first consultation, and we have reviewed our analysis to incorporate any additional points raised.

Again details are available via the above link to the Board Paper and Annexes. In some cases, the circumstances have changed, for instance the abolition of Government regions, and some new issues have arisen, such as in relation to the Localism Bill.

Natural England Decision

All the issues raised and alternative boundary suggestions received, were taken into account by the Natural England Board. The Board concluded that it remains desirable to designate the proposed areas as National Park. This decision was also informed by the Strategic Environmental Assessment, revised as a result of the consultation, and an Equality Impact Assessment.

With regard to detailed boundaries, the Board considered that in many cases there were strong arguments both for and against alternative suggestions, but overall concluded that, with one exception, the proposals put forward for consultation in 2011 represent the most appropriate, pragmatic boundaries.

The exception to this is the boundary of the southern extension to the Lake District National Park, where new evidence was submitted which has led us to conclude that a small area (54 hectares) to the north of Sizergh Castle should also be included within the Lake District National Park.

Having reviewed the original evaluations (in November 2009) and the analysis of responses to the two statutory and public consultations (in March 2011 and in September 2011), the Board determined that:

> the boundary of the Yorkshire Dales National Park should be varied to the north, to include parts of the Orton Fells, the northern Howgill Fells, Wild Boar Fell and Mallerstang; and to the west, to include Barbon, Middleton, Casterton and Leck Fells, the River Lune and, part of Firbank Fell and other fells to the west of the river;

and

> the boundary of the Lake District National Park should be varied to the east, to include an area from Birkbeck Fells Common to Whinfell Common; and to the south to include an area from Helsington Barrows to Sizergh Fell, and part of the Lyth Valley, including the small new addition of land North of Sizergh Castle

These variations will not take effect until and unless confirmed by the Secretary of State.

Next Steps

Following this decision, Natural England is drawing up Orders to vary the boundaries of the two National Parks. These Orders will then be submitted to the Secretary of State and placed on deposit for public inspection for a period of 28 days which we anticipate will commence during February 2012.

Any person may comment in writing during this period to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State must give consideration to all objections, and may hold a public inquiry.

A public inquiry must be held if a County or District Council with land in the National Park or proposed extensions objects and does not withdraw its objection.

We have also updated the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report as a result of the further consultation and are producing the SEA Statement which will be placed on the project website at

www.naturalengland.org.uk/lakestodales.

If you would like to discuss this with a Natural England officer, please contact

the Project Lead, David Vose, on 07900 608492 or

david.vose@naturalengland.org.uk.

CLUB PROCEEDINGS

AGM

The Annual General Meeting was held at The Stirk House Hotel, Gisburn on November 19th with 54 members present including Eddie Edkins who did not stay for the dinner.

After a minute's silence to remember members who had died since the last AGM, officers' reports and the accounts were debated and adopted and the officers and committee were elected for the forthcoming year.

Membership subscriptions were confirmed as unchanged.

The Committee had agreed increases in hut fees to take effect after 1st November 2011

LHG Other users from £7 to £8 per bednight

Both Huts , an increase in fees for all members by 50p per night ie YRC members £4.00 and Kindred Club members £5.50 per bed night

The President made his report as detailed hereafter.

The Membership Secretary declared one member, Tony Wickett, as having achieved the status of a Life Member having been in the Club for 35 years.

During the year there had been five deaths; Adrian Bridge, John Devenport, Ron Goodwin, Howard Humphreys and George Postill; five resignations; Steve Beresford, Mike Hartland, David Laughton, Denny Moorhouse and Tony Smythe, and two new members; Robert Gait and Laurie Partington.

Current membership 170 (a net loss of 7 on the year).

The appointments to positions were;

President Elect	Michael Smith
Hon.Treasurer	Arthur Salmon
Hon.Secretary	Richard Kirby
Huts Secretary	Richard Josephy
Lowstern Warden	Barrie Wood
LHG Warden	Gordon Humphreys

Other committee members ;

Mick Borroff (Membership Secretary)
Martyn Trasler,
Ged Champion (Tacklemaster),
Andrew Syme (Webmaster),
Peter Elliot.

Editor	Roy Denney
Hon. Auditor	Derek Bush

Volunteers were sought for the vacant positions of Librarian and Archivist.

98TH ANNUAL DINNER

The Stirk House Hotel, Gisburn
19th November, 2011

The Club's Guests

Principal Guest - Chris Brown

Fell & Rock Climbing Club - John Barrett

The Craven Pothole Club - Jeff Cowling

The Gritstone Club - Dennis Chapman

The Wayfarers' Club - Nick Edwards

The Yorkshire Mountaineering Club - Pete Stott

The Dinner followed the AGM. Our Principal Guest, Chris Brown, farmer and climber from Thirsk, gave a talk, with slides, entitled 'The Seven Summits'. The talk was inspiring and interesting. Through outstanding achievements in mountaineering and marathon running Chris has raised funds for workshops in Harrogate for people with schizophrenia.

Member's Guests

Ken Coote
Andrew Luck
Ian Ferguson
Russell Myers

Members Attending

Chadwick, Peter (President)

Armstrong, Dennis	Handley, David	MacKay, Don
Bensley, Bruce	Hemingway, John	MacKay, Duncan
Borroff, Mick	Hick, David	Martindale, David
Bush, Derek	Holmes, David	Moss, Peter
Campion, Ged	Humphreys, Gordon	Oakes, Aaron
Chapman, Albert	Humphreys, Jason	Renton, Alister
Chapman, Ian	Ibberson, Rob	Robinson, Harry
Clare, Alan	Jenkins, John	Salmon, Arthur
Clayton, Derek	Josephy, Tim	Salmon, Trevor
Crowther, Ian	Kay, Alan	Smith, Michael
Crowther, Robert	Kirby, Richard	Smith, Richard
Denney, Roy	Laing, Ian	Spenceley, George
Dix, Roger	Large, Cliff	Sterland, John
Dover, Paul	Large, David	Syme Andy
Dover, Phil	Linford, Alan	Trasler, Martyn
Dover, Richard	Lofthouse, Bill	Varney, John
Farrant, Darrell	Lofthouse, Tim	Whalley, John
Gilmour, Iain	Lomas, Harvey	Wilkinson, Frank
Hanbury, Alan	Lovett, John	Wood, Barrie



PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The President opened his address by asking us to stand for a moment's silence to remember those five members who have died during the year, to remember their friendship and the contribution they all made to the club. John Devenport, Ron Goodwin, Howard Humphries, Adrian Bridge and George Postill.

He then went on to acknowledge the work of the Committee. We have had five meetings, the same as last year. This seems to work well. However it is a big commitment in terms of both time and expense for any members who have to travel a distance to Lowstern. Therefore, to make meetings more open and accessible, we have decided to experiment and tack the December meeting onto the end of the Christmas Meet. If this works then we will try and do it again later on in the year.

Two members of the Committee are leaving this year -

Albert Chapman and Ian Crowther.

Both of them have given very long and distinguished service to the Club and he invited a round of applause. We are looking for a new librarian but Albert has kindly agreed to carry on until we find a replacement. Jeff Hooper has also decided to stand down as archivist and any offers of help in that area will also be greatly received.

We do need younger blood on the Committee and he is therefore very pleased that Peter Elliott has agreed to put his name forward this time.

He went on to thank all the Committee members and officers for the time and trouble they all take to fulfil their duties. It never ceases to amaze him how efficiently he feels, they all carry out their jobs. The President said he would particularly like to thank the following:

" Firstly, Barrie Wood and his team for designing, costing and installing the excellent new kitchen at Lowstern.

" Andy Syme for designing the Club's new website, uploading all the old journals and for sending out the regular mailings and e-mails.

" Mick Borroff on membership and for being instrumental in putting the Meets list together.

" Richard Josephy as Huts Secretary and for his very interesting analysis of our usage as mentioned in his report.

" Arthur Salmon for finances and for making sure that even though we have spent £12,000 on the new kitchen, the cash at bank has only gone down by some £6,000.

" Gordon Humphries for continuing to look after our interests at LHG.

" Roy Denney for publishing two more excellent journals.

" To Paul Dover for supporting me as Vice President and for taking the time to come all the way up from Cambridge to attend Committee meetings.

" And last but not least, to Richard Kirby for dealing with all the secretarial details as well as organising tonight's dinner.

Next, he turned to the Meets Programme - we have had a good varied Meets Programme this year and he is grateful to all Meet Leaders who put so much work into ensuring their success. He pointed out there remains a core group of members who attend more than one or two meets a year. Andy Syme and Roy Denney have done some interesting analysis on the statistics.

Next year's Meets Programme has now virtually been fixed and publicised. Lots of new interesting places to visit and things to do including returning to a summer meet at LHG and visits to Ireland and the Alps. Peter expressed the hope

that members will try and come on some of them but acknowledged that if only able to manage one that's better than none at all. He especially hopes that the Alps Meet will be better attended next year.

We had floated possible visits to the Altai Mountains in Mongolia or to the Drakensburg with the Mountain Club of South Africa both of which came to nothing but Mike Smith is looking at the feasibility of visiting the Malawi Highlands in 2013 and has put a slide show on at the AGM and is also exploring the possibility of a return to Nepal.

E-mails - The President touched briefly on this as it has caused some problems with members. Just to re-cap, the procedure is that all members without e-mail addresses will continue to receive Mailings by post. Members who have e-mail and are happy to use it will get Mailings by e-mail. But members with e-mail who still prefer to receive a paper copy will continue to do so.

Your Committee have also reviewed the Ring Around process to make sure that all members who are not on e-mail will receive more immediate information in a timely manner.

Website - As mentioned in the October Mailing, the new website had now gone live. There are bound to be some teething problems but we are confident that the new website will be much better than the old one. For example, it allows booking onto Meets online. Andy is on hand to explain if you have any problems and want to speak to him.

Membership - As mentioned, five members have passed away this year and we have had two new members, Laurie Partington and Robert Gait, who is Albert's grandson.

There are five prospective members on the books but it is suspected that some of them have probably gone cold as they have not responded to invites to Meets.

He touched on the changing membership profile of the club and Albert Chapman is keen to have a Junior Section within the Club

ROLL OF HONOUR

PRESIDENTS

1892-93 Geo T Lowe
 1893-03 Wm Cecil Slingsby
 1903-06 Alfred Barran
 1906-09 Rev LS Calvert
 1909-12 Lewis Moore
 1912-19 Walter Parsons
 1919-22 WA Brigg
 1922-23 JC Atkinson
 1923-25 EE Roberts
 1925-27 F Leach
 1927-29 HH Bellhouse
 1929-30 TS Booth
 1930-31 T Gray
 1931-32 AE Horn
 1932-34 WV Brown
 1934-36 A Rule
 1936-38 JM Davidson
 1938-46 C Chubb
 1946-48 H Armstrong
 1948-50 CE Burrow
 1950-52 Davis Burrow
 1952-54 J Hilton
 1954-56 HL Stembridge
 1956-58 S Marsden
 1958-60 TH Godley
 1960-62 FW Stembridge
 1962-64 RE Chadwick
 1964-66 WPB Stonehouse
 1966-68 EC Downham
 1968-70 EM Tregoning
 1970-72 AB Craven
 1972-74 BE Nicholson
 1974-76 JB Devenport
 1976-78 FD Smith
 1978-80 JP Barton
 1980-82 WR Lofthouse
 1982-84 WA Linford
 1984-86 JD Armstrong
 1986-88 PC Swindells
 1988-90 AC Brown
 1990-92 DA Smithson
 1992-94 GA Salmon
 1994-96 CD Bush
 1996-98 TW Josephy
 1998-00 WCI Crowther
 2000-02 AR Chapman
 2002-04 TA Kay
 2004-06 K Aldred
 2006-08 FM Godden
 2008-10 AD Bridge
 2010 - PRP Chadwick

HONORARY MEMBERS (PAST)

1892 Edward Whympier
 1892 Wm Cecil Slingsby
 1892 Clinton T Dent
 1892 8th Duke of Devonshire
 1892 Charles E Matthews
 1892 The Earl of Wharnccliffe

1893 Charles Pilkington
 1893 Charles F Tetley
 1893 Gerald W Balfour, MP
 1893 Sir W Martin Conway
 1900 Horace Walker
 1907 Sir Alfred Hopkinson
 1907 EA Martel
 1907 G Winthrop Young
 1909 Dr Norman Collie
 1909 James Anson Farrer
 1921 George Yeld
 1921 George T Lowe
 1923 Charles Scriven
 1925 Canon AD Tupper-Carey
 1939 Sydney J Farrer
 1939 Walter Parsons
 1946 Robert de Joly
 1949 Ernest E Roberts
 1955 Sir R Charles Evans
 1956 Harry Spilsbury
 1959 Fred Booth
 1959 Davis Burrow
 1965 Clifford Chubb
 1965 Jack Hilton
 1968 E. Cliff Downham
 1968 Stanley Marsden
 1968 HG Watts
 1977 HL Stembridge
 1985 A David M Cox
 1998 Major W Lacy TD
 1990 F David Smith

HONORARY MEMBERS (CURRENT)

1988 Dr John Farrer
 1997 Derek Bush
 1997 George Spenceley
 2001 Alan Brown
 2003 Alan Linford
 2008 Iain Gilmour
 2008 Gordon Humphries
 2008 John Lovett
 2008 Chewang Motup
 2010 Albert Chapman

VICE PRESIDENTS

1892-93 H Slater
 1919-22 EE Roberts
 1892-93 G Arnold
 1921-23 F Constantine
 1893-94 G T Lowe
 1922-24 P Robinson
 1893-94 L Moore
 1923-25 JF Seaman
 1898-00 Rev LS Calvert
 1924-26 M Botterill
 1899-01 JC Atkinson
 1925-27 L Moore
 1900-02 A Barran

1926-28 W Villiers Brown
 1901-03 Dr Tempest Anderson
 1927-29 CE Benson
 1902-04 Dr FH Mayo
 1928-30 CE Burrow
 1903-05 W Parsons
 1929-31 WA Wright
 1904-06 JA Green
 1930-32 C Chubb
 1908-10 F Leach
 1931-33 GL Hudson
 1909-11 C Hastings
 1932-34 FS Smythe
 1910-12 A Rule
 1933-35 JM Davidson
 1911-13 JH Buckley
 1934-35 GA Potter-Kirby
 1912-14 CA Hill
 1935-37 J Hilton
 1913-19 AE Horn
 1935-37 H Humphreys
 1914-19 H Brodrick
 1937-46 A Humphreys
 1919-21 CRB Wingfield
 1938-46 H Armstrong
 1946-48 D Burrow
 1946-48 AL Middleton
 1948-49 GS Gowing
 1948-50 GC Marshall
 1949-50 HG Watts
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 1950-53 J Godley
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 1954-56 RE Chadwick
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 1956-58 CW Jorgensen
 1957-59 JA Holmes
 1958-60 JE Cullingworth
 1959-61 J Lovett
 1960-62 WPB Stonehouse
 1961-63 MF Wilson
 1962-64 EC Downham
 1963-65 BE Nicholson
 1964-66 JA Dosser
 1965-67 FD Smith
 1966-68 MD Bone
 1967-69 AR Chapman
 1968-70 JD Driscoll
 1969-71 J Hemingway
 1970-72 EJ Woodman
 1971-73 WA Linford
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 1974-76 JP Barton
 1975-77 WR Lofthouse
 1976-78 J Williamson
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 1978-80 J Stuttard
 1979-81 GA Salmon
 1980-82 PC Swindells

1981-83 DA Smithson
 1982-84 TW Josephy
 1983-85 DJ Atherton
 1984-86 GR Turner
 1985-87 AC Brown
 1986-88 R Cowing
 1987-89 CR Allen
 1988-90 DRH Mackay
 1990-92 WCI Crowther
 1992-94 H Robinson
 1994-96 K Aldred
 1996-98 IFD Gilmour
 1998-00 DA Hick
 2000-02 DJ Handley
 2002-04 G Champion
 2004-06 FM Godden
 2006-08 RA Kirby
 2008-10 M Borroff
 2010 - PA Dover

MEMBERS ELECTED TO THE ALPINE CLUB (CURRENT)

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 Ged Champion
 Albert Chapman
 Chris Fitzhugh
 Richard Gowing
 David Hick
 Alister Renton
 George Spenceley
 Michael Smith
 Chewang Motup

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 Caspert, JD
 Chapman, A
 Clarke, PD
 Clayton, WD
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 Denney, RJ
 Ellis, JR
 Errington, RD
 Farrant, DJ
 Goodwin, R
 Gowing, R
 Hamlin, JF
 Handley, DJ
 Garben, R
 Hemmingway, J
 Hobson, MP
 Holmes, D
 Hooper, JH
 Humphreys, H
 Humphries, RG
 Ince, GR
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Kinder, MJ
 Laing, IG
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 Lockwood, P
 Lofthouse, WR
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 Oxtoby, DM
 Pomfret, RE
 Renton, K
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 Rowlands, C
 Salmon, GA
 Salmon, RT
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 Short, J
 Smith, SH
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 Smithson, DA
 Spenceley, GB
 Stemberge, DW
 Stemberge, SW
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 Varney, JA
 Wickett, A.J.
 Wilkinson, B
 Wilkinson, F

HONORARY TREASURERS

1892-93 HH Bellhouse
 1893-99 H Slater
 1899-04 J Davis
 1904-21 AE Horn
 1921-24 C Chubb
 1924-51 BA Bates
 1951-78 S Marsden
 1978-83 D Laughton
 1984-90 JD Armstrong
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 1893-98 HH Bellhouse
 1898-09 L Moore
 1910-20 F Constantine
 1920-24 CE Burrow
 1924-29 J Buckley
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 1956-57 CR Allen
 1957-66 EC Downham
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 1979-83 J Hemingway
 1983-93 CD Bush
 1993-96 JA Schofield
 1996-08 RG Humphreys
 2008--- RA Kirby

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1894-10 F Constantine
 1957-62 J Hemingway
 1910-12 JR Green
 1962-64 TW Salmon
 1912-19 L Moore
 1964-68 WCI Crowther
 1919-24 J Buckley
 1968-73 FD Smith
 1924-26 AS Lowden
 1973-79 J Hemingway
 1926-46 FS Booth
 1979-83 CD Bush
 1946-52 FW Stemberge
 1983-85 J Hemingway
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 1985-92 M Smith
 1953-54 C IW Fox
 1992-95 MJ Kinder
 1954-57 EC Downham

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2008- M. Boroff

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 1949-70 HG Watt
 1970-83 AB Craven
 1984-90 AC Brown
 1990-93 DJ Atherton
 1993-03 M Smith
 2003--- RJ Denney

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 1958-59 RB Whardall
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 1960-70 AB Craven
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HONORARY HUTS SECRETARIES

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 (Low Hall Garth)

1957-59 JD Driscoll
 (Low Hall Garth)
 1958-62 PR Harris
 (Lowstern)
 1959-66 FD Smith
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 1962-66 FD Smith
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 1966-67 AR Chapman
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HONORARY WARDENS LOW HALL GARTH

1952-55 GB Spenceley
 1955-59 A Tallon
 1959-73 JD Driscoll
 1973-76 FD Smith
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 1978-84 N Newman
 1986-89 WA Linford
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 2001-02 M Edmundson
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1958-64 J Lovett
 1964-67 J Richards
 1967-72 CG Renton
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 1974-76 A Hartley
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 1982-86 C Bauer
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OBITUARIES



George Band, who died in August at the age of 82, was one of the team of 1953 which summited Everest and two years later he and Joe Brown made the first ascent of Kanchenjunga.

Aged 23, Band was the youngest member of the Everest team but his Alpine record won him his place and during the expedition he was responsible for the radio equipment and food and he helped pioneer the route through the Khumbu Icefall and up the 3,700ft Lhotse Face.

He was actually one of the team at Advanced Base Camp (21,000ft) when Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay returned from their conquest. It must have been something of an anticlimax when he returned to Cambridge for his final year.

In retirement, after a career in the oil industry, Band was a President of the Alpine Club and of the BMC; Chairman of the Mount Everest Foundation and the Himalayan Trust; and council member of the Royal Geographical Society.

2010 also saw the passing of another survivor from the Everest expedition which I missed at the time. **Alfred Gregory** died in Melbourne early in the year at the grand old age of 96. He was the official if amateur photographer for the climb which was to lead to a career in photography as well as being a mountain guide. Brought up in Blackpool, 'Greg' was a member of the Alpine Club.



Nawang Gombu Sherpa died earlier this year and was actually younger than George Band and was one of the support team for the Everest expedition. He later got to the summit himself and was the first person to do so more than once. He was 17 when on the expedition which successfully climbed Everest in 1953. A nephew of Tenzing Norgay, he had a long and successful career on the mountains.

Whilst on the subject of Everest we must mark the passing of another remarkable mountaineer; an extreme alpinist!

Swiss mountain guide **Erhard Loretan** was killed whilst guiding on the Grünhorn (4043m) in the Bernese Alps, Switzerland.



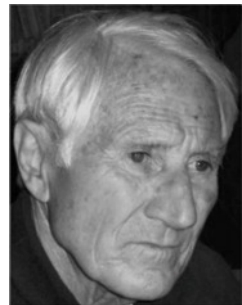
Loretan was the third climber to top all fourteen 8000m peaks and in 1983 completed a hat trick of 8000m peaks

climbed within a 17 day period - Gasherbrum II (8035m), Gasherbrum I (8068m) and Broad Peak (8091m).

He was probably best known for his ground-breaking two day ascent of Everest back in 1986. Loretan took the fast and light techniques of climbing in the Alps and applied them to the major peaks. The 1986 climb with his long term climbing partner, Jean Troillet, saw them leaving base camp in the late afternoon of 28 August, they skied to the foot of the north face and set off up the Japanese couloir, climbing through the night unroped and at high speed. An afternoon doze at the base of the Hornbein couloir at 7,900m. in the comparative warmth of the day set them up for the night ahead.

After another night of extreme effort without bottled oxygen, they reached the summit at 2pm on 30 August before racing (or mostly sliding) back to base in five hours.

Another stalwart to pass away this year was **Walter Bonatti** who died in September aged 81, and was considered one of the finest mountaineers of the 20th century.



Born in Bergamo, Italy, at 18 he made the fourth ascent of the north face of the Pointe Walker on the Grandes Jorasses in the Mont Blanc range and at 19 began to train as a mountain guide. He came to wider notice in July 1951, when, aged 21, he made the first ascent of the Grand Capucin rock pinnacle, an extraordinary red granite pinnacle in the Mont Blanc massif.

Three years later he was, at 24, the youngest man to be chosen to join the 1954 Italian expedition that conquered K2. This expedition was mired with controversy which dogged him for most of his life but he went on to become famous for his technical accomplishments, often climbing alone and in severe winter conditions, and for bagging a number of first ascents.

He disdained modern technology and was only interested in near impossible climbs an attitude which nearly cost him dear. In 1955, he made a solo climb of a new route of the Petit Dru in the French Alps, and was forced to survive six days on the rock face. One of the pillars of this climb was to be named after him. Never one to be deterred, ten years later he carried out the first winter solo ascent of the north face of the Matterhorn.

As the years passed Bonatti suggested that modern equipment had diminished the challenges. The "impossible" which he had always attempted "has lost more and more ground," he is quoted as saying, "and great achievements have become rather less great." They were great when he did them and Doug Scott, one of the first two Britons to conquer Everest, called Bonatti "perhaps the finest Alpinist there has ever been".

Bonatti was awarded the French Legion d'Honneur for saving the lives of two fellow-climbers in a disaster in the Alps. He worked as a photojournalist and authored a number of books about climbing and mountaineering.



Another tireless worker for causes close to our heart has died this year. **James Perry O'Flaherty Lynam**, who has died at the age of 86, was another great loss to the sport.

Actually born in London of Irish parents 'Joss' was a keen hill walker, orienteer and mountaineer who undertook many expeditions to the Alps and to Asia's Greater Ranges, but also was a prolific writer and made an outstanding contribution to adventure sports in Ireland

At 18 in 1942, he went with the Royal Engineers to India, where he learned to speak Hindi and spent much time in the Himalayan foothills, which set the tone for much of his later life. He then attended Trinity College Dublin, and co-founded the Irish Mountaineering Club (1948)

Lynam's career as a civil engineer took him to a number of mountainous areas, including Wales, the Lake District and India.

He went on to be leader or deputy leader of expeditions to Greenland, the Andes, Kashmir, Tien Shan, Garhwal and Tibet, including the 1987 expedition to Chang-tse (7,543m), which was the forerunner to the successful first Irish ascent of Everest in 1993.

He celebrated his 80th birthday climbing the Paradise Lost route, and abseiled down Winder's Slab on his 82nd birthday. Both were to raise money for cancer research, as he had had treatment himself.

Alan Blackshaw's death in August will leave a massive hole in the world of access to the high places we all can now enjoy. In the long battle for access to our mountains and moorlands, there have been few stronger advocates than Alan.



Looking back on his achievements it might be easier to state what he has not done.

He believed passionately that all people should have access to nature, whether in urban parks or in the wildest, most remote locations. His early and continuing endeavors in this field have ultimately led to the creation of Statutory Local Access Forums like the one I have the satisfaction of Chairing for Leicestershire.

Alan took up the baton from an earlier generation of campaigners who in vain introduced bills to allow statutory access to Britain's wilder places, beginning the process that culminated in legislation finally being enacted only in the last few years.

Alan gave vital evidence to the Scottish Parliament, helping bring about access legislation north of the border which is much more progressive and far more straightforward than that we have to contend with in England and Wales.

Alan enjoyed a very successful career in the civil service, including as PPS to several government ministers during the '60s, he worked as a management consultant and did some writing but we will best remember him for his appreciation of and support for wild country and our right to enjoy it.

He was born in 1933 and had the adventure bug from an early age and it never left him. In his early teens he cycled from his Liverpool home to Lands End and back, and to Glencoe and Lochaber where he was introduced to the world of climbing. Like many in that era and still not 20 years old, he wandered the country sleeping where he could and taking every opportunity to get a climb in. As a 19 year old at Oxford, he climbed l'Aiguille du Diable in the Mont Blanc range and the seed was sown for his future activities. Even last year and suffering from cancer, he sailed across the Atlantic to South America.

He did his national service in the Marines and became an instructor in cliff assaults. He climbed all over the world and did some epic ski trips and when wear and tear meant these activities were too much, he went on to bag all the Monros. In 1972 he made a continuous 500 mile ski traverse of the Alps from Kaprun to Gap and the following year he started a project which was to take him 5 years; skiing the length of Scandinavia, from the northern tip of Norway to Adneram in the south.

Quite apart from his own enjoyment in it, he contributed enormously to mountaineering; as secretary to the Climbers' Club, reforming the British Mountaineering Council, editing journals and writing for Penguin, one of the bibles of the sport; 'Mountaineering: From Hillwalking to Alpine Climbing' (1965). Tell anyone you have been reading 'Blackshaw' and they will automatically know this is the book you are referring to.

In more recent years he was an able president of the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation

Editor of the Alpine Journal (1966-70), President of the British Mountaineering Council (1973-76), Chair British Ski Federation (1985-88), Chair Plas y Brenin (1985-97), Board member Scottish Sports Council (1990-95), Chair Scottish National Ski Council (1991-94), Board member Scottish Natural Heritage (1991-97) President Scottish National Ski Council (1994-00), President Ski Club of Great Britain (1997-03) and President the Alpine Club (2001-04).

Alan was awarded the OBE and VRD

Thank you Alan.

Ed.

George Patrick Postill (1928-2011)

Member since 1974.

George died from a heart attack on the 8th August, 2011 at St James's Hospital, Leeds, after a period of ill-health.



George was born into a working-class family in 1928 and was brought up in Middleton, south Leeds.

He started work at 14 as an apprentice motor mechanic and was called up for national service in the early post-war years when he served on the Continent.

On returning to civilian life he worked for a time with the nationalised road transport industry before joining the vehicle maintenance section of Leeds City Council where he worked his way through the ranks from the shop floor up to management level. George was largely self-educated, was very well read with a real interest in learning, and gained the qualifications he needed to pursue his career by part-time study.

Following the death of his first wife, Shirley, I introduced him to the Club having maintained a close friendship with him since the early fifties.

When he joined the Club, George had had little experience of mountains, but he became an avid fell-walker enjoying the British mountains in all their varied conditions.

One winter LHG meet stands out particularly in my memory when George and I traversed Crinkle Crag in total white-out conditions.

The enjoyment and camaraderie that we experienced that day and the satisfaction of navigating the hill under those conditions certainly matched that I've enjoyed on much bigger and more difficult mountains.

George enthusiastically undertook a number of offices within the Club: Committee, 1979-84, LHG warden, 1976-78 and Lowstern Warden, 1978-79. He will also be remembered in the Club for the very professional manner he acted as master of ceremonies and toast master at a number of Annual Dinners.

Although unable to take part in active meets in recent years due to ill-health, George continued to attend the Annual Dinners and AGMs and gave a dialect recitation at last year's Dinner.

George's other interests were many, including long-standing involvement with the trade union movement and the local Labour Party. He was also very interested in literature, especially poetry reading and writing, and was an active member of Leeds Arts Theatre and Leeds Civic Theatre Guild where he worked tirelessly in the theatre design workshop and in stage management.

It was through his involvement with Leeds Arts Theatre that George met Eileen, whom he married in 1974. Together they shared a mutual interest in the theatre throughout their marriage of 37 years. Through their involvement with the Civic Theatre Guild, they were both deeply involved in planning the move in 2005 of the Civic Theatre from the Leeds Institute, now the City Museum, to its new home in the Carriageworks Theatre.

Another very important part of George's life was Woodkirk Parish Church, Tingley, where he worshipped regularly with Eileen, served on the P.C.C. and was for many years a Church Warden.

Eileen will be well remembered by many in the members of the Club from her attendances with George at many of the Club's 'Ladies' Weekend' meets.

Arthur Salmon

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SPARE COPIES OF MOST
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AND IF NEW MEMBERS
WOULD LIKE TO HAVE
SOME PLEASE CONTACT
THE EDITOR.**

**SIMILARLY IF FOR
WHATEVER REASON
OTHER MEMBERS HAVE
A GAP IN THEIR
COLLECTION WE MAY BE
ABLE TO FILL IT.**

**THE TREASURER WOULD
APPRECIATE A
CONTRIBUTION
TOWARDS THE
COSTS**

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, at no extra cost.

The badges are available in two versions, either the straightforward 50 mm diameter circular badge or a larger, 65 mm diameter version with the words 'A mountaineering and caving club founded in 1892' around the outside.

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 from S to XXL. The smaller badge can be embroidered onto any items; which are available in a wide range of colours, but the larger badge can only be done on to an item coloured in YRC bottle green.

Some items can usually be delivered ex stock (the fleeces, sweatshirts and embroidered logos/badges) whereas the other items would be supplied to order.

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.



EN REPOSE

Michael Smith, our President Elect, takes a breather before his work really begins. Before he takes the Chair he is finding respite in the chair in Alport Dale





Constitution

The Club's rules and bye-laws are printed in journal series 13 issue 11 - Summer 2011

Enquiries regarding the possible hire of Club cottages should be addressed to

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135 Divinity Road
Oxford OX4 1LW
Tel. 01865 723630
richard.josephy@ntl.world.com**

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Members can be contacted via the Secretary and other authors via the Editor.

The current series 13 of the journals goes back to Summer 2006.

Series 12 was published under the title of the 'Yorkshire Rambler' and goes back to summer 1994. Both these series are held in electronic form.

Earlier journals can be accessed for information and go back to the formation of the club in 1892

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the YRC or its Officers.

Deadlines for material for the journals are June 15th & December 15th

The Yorkshire Ramblers Club



Established 1892 - www.yrc.org.uk

The Mountaineering and Caving Club

The aims of the Club are to organise walking, mountaineering and skiing excursions; to encourage the exploration of caves and pot-holes; the pursuit of other outdoor activities and to gather and promote knowledge concerning natural history, archaeology, folklore and kindred subjects.

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The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the YRC or its Officers.

The YRC Journal is published twice a year and is free to members and certain kindred clubs. First published July 1899

Club Properties

**Low Hall Garth
Little Langdale
Cumbria**



**Lowstern
Clapham
North Yorkshire**