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CLAPHAM FROM LOWSTERN

PHOTO - ROY DENNEY

GRANDE ANELLO DEI SIBILLINI

BEAUFORT-SUR-DORON, SAVOIE

TIEN-SHAN MOUNTAINS

NEW ZEALAND

ANGLESEY

LAKELAND

CAIRNGORMS

PENNINES

CONTENTS

3	Evolution of the Club	
4	Bentley Bentham	Richard Gowing
5	The Way Forward	Roy Denney
7	Grande Anello	Richard Josephy
9	Beaufort-sur-Doron	Michael Smith
14	Tulips of Tien Shan	John & Valerie Middleton
21	Natural History	
23	Down under in NZ	Roy Denney
27	Chippings	
30	Club Proceedings	
37	Obituaries and appreciations	
41	UK Meet reports	
	Anglesey Long Walk	July 8 - 10
	Lowstern introductory meet	Aug 26 - 28
	Great Langdale	Sep 16 - 18
	Joint meet with the Wayfarers	
	North Pennines	Oct 14 - 16
	Kirby Lonsdale	Nov 18 - 20
	Dinner meet	
	Lowstern, Clapham	Dec 9 - 11
	Little Langdale	Jan 6 - 8
	Cairngorms	Feb 2 - 5
56	Useful web sites	
56	Club merchandise	

EVOLUTION

As the Club approaches the 125th anniversary of its formation it is worth considering how it has evolved. When a group of gentlemen formed it in 1892 they could not have envisaged how it would turn out or conceive the world we now inhabit. Back then when it was far from easy to get to remote mountain areas even in the UK, they had to have both time and resources. There was no commercial flying quickly off to distant parts to pursue the sports we love. When they met in the Skyrack Inn, Headingley if we had been there to tell them how the world is today they would have called for the men in white coats.

The Club grew steadily over the years and its horizons broadened. Our ambitions become more daring and the foundations of the Club and its activities as they are today were laid.

For many years no members of the supposedly weaker sex joined the Club and to accommodate the partners of the members and afford them the opportunity to come out with us, a tradition of Ladies Meets developed. Initially these were in locations where couples could camp, use hostels or sleep in their vans if they chose but based on an hotel where those seeking creature comforts could take rooms and where the group as a whole could dine together.

Another tradition which took root to involve families of members was an annual Lads and Dads meet when members brought their sons along.

As time went by and lady guests started attending some of our functions and meets and ladies started joining the Club both these traditions further evolved. The Lads and Dads became a family meet and eventually Introductory meets, and the Ladies Meets, social meets.

A large number of members have been the sons and grandsons of former members and the family meet is an important way of enthusing the next generation. We now see sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters coming along.

The social meet inviting partners of members to join us started to lose some of its purpose when non-members were invited to our annual dinner and an increasing number of members used that opportunity to bring their partners along.

A number of wives also joined the Club and started coming on general meets. This social meet gradually morphed into an hotel based walking break which a number of couples attended regularly but which the Club decided was no longer necessary as part of the official programme.

Those members who enjoyed these breaks do however still get together and last year eight couples visited Dovedale staying in the The Izaak Walton Hotel. They walked the Manifold and Dove valleys; a lamb stuck with its head in a gate was rescued; much (perhaps too much) good food was eaten and a good time was had by all with the possible exception of the Linfords who had to find a replacement jockey wheel for their caravan.



Enjoying this May-time in Derbyshire were Dennis and Joan Armstrong, Paul and Anne Dover, Iain and Sarah Gilmour, Mike and Marcia Godden, Ian and Una Laing, Cliff and Cathie Large, Alan and Angela Linford and Tim and Elaine Josephy with their dog Bramble.



During the stay they did meet another creature supposedly a dog. Conversation in the hotel with the owner revealed it was a Leonberger, weighed 11 stones, and was called Hagrid.

BENTLEY BEETHAM

Richard Gowing

Most of my summer holidays with my parents from the late 1930s to 1946 were spent at Stonethwaite in upper Borrowdale; Stonethwaite Beck was my beach!

During the later years my father introduced me to proper fellwalking, leading to my first ascent of Great Gable in 1945 at the age of 11 and the following year Scafell Pike. But the real highlight of my 1945 holiday was my first rock climb. To quote from my father's notes for August 1945: "Ran into Bentley Beetham & he & I took R up what he calls the North & South Climbs on the crags on the spur of High Knott overlooking the old Mission Hall". This was a corrugated iron building between Mountain View Cottages and the Stonethwaite road end. It originally came, I believe, from the wad (graphite) mine at Seathwaite and was used by BB as a climbing hut for his boys from Barnard Castle School.

Seventy years on, all that remains to indicate the site of Beetham's hut is the iron wicket gate, no longer usable due to the wire mesh fencing that covers the roadside face of the wall; looking over the gate nothing is visible in the grass of the site of the hut. But the memory of the hut and of the life of Bentley Beetham has been revived by the publication of a fine biography by a former pupil of his at Barnard Castle School, which was brought to my attention by its review by Ronald Faux in the 2014 Alpine Journal.

Much of the foreword and introduction deal with the biography's author Michael Lowes, who sadly died before the publication of his book. They do reveal the great influence that Beetham had on Barnard Castle School and its boys.

The early chapters cover Home and School, and Birds and Books. Beetham's passion for photographing birds in inaccessible places developed his skills as a climber, for which his contemporaries in the YRC would have known him.

This led initially to his selection in 1911 for an expedition to the remote island of Jan Mayen. Sadly the captain of the ship initially failed to find the island, and when they did find it, it proved impossible for them to land on it.

However, his growing interest in rock-climbing blossomed in the years up to the war, and afterwards he took up alpine climbing with Howard Somervell and Godfrey Solly (and with our own Ernest Roberts) (Chapter 4 of the book). It was during this period, sadly not mentioned in the book, that Beetham made the second ascent, with Claud Frankland of the YRC, of Scafell Central Buttress (YRCJ Vol 5 (1929) p.9).

His prowess in the Alps and on British rock led to his selection for the 1924 Everest Expedition as one of the leading climbers. Sadly he was badly affected by sciatica which despite his best efforts prevented him from taking much of an active part in the expedition, although he took many fine photographs, some of which have been used to illustrate this book. His part in the expedition is covered in some detail in the next three chapters, occupying some 50 pages, almost a third of the book. While these make interesting and enjoyable reading, they leave little room for what many of us would consider the most significant phase of his life, during which he made his great contributions to climbing in the Lake District with his thorough exploration and development of the Borrowdale crags.

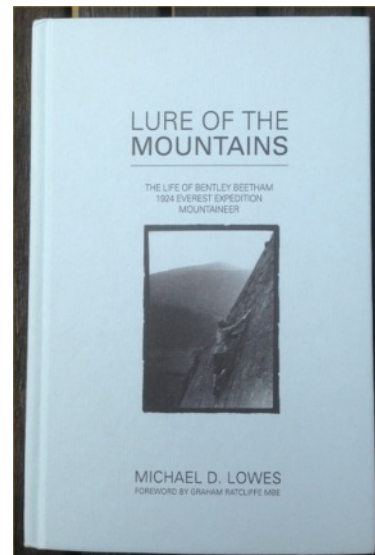
These final two chapters: "After Everest: Teaching and Climbing" and "Essence of BB" cover the remainder of his life from the mid 1920s to his death in 1963, aged 76. They include his use of the hut in Borrowdale with his Barnard Castle boys as well as all-too-brief reference to climbs with his contemporaries, as well as his explorations and opening up of climbing in the Atlas Mountains, again making most enjoyable reading.

However I feel that for us mountaineers the book hardly does justice to his extensive record of climbs in the Alps and, his greatest contribution to the English climbing scene, his exploration of the crags of Borrowdale, with barely a mention of those that have become classics. For a complete biography, it would have been nice to see appendices listing his ascents in the Lakes, the Alps and the Atlas, information which is no doubt held in the archives of Barnard Castle School.

As a biography of one of the most distinguished mountaineers to have been a member of the YRC (from 1925 until 1963) this is a book that, despite its over-emphasis on Everest at the expense of the rest of his interesting life, I can heartily recommend.

Further information on Beetham's life can be found in the obituaries in the journals of the YRC (Vol. 9 pp. 344-345), the Fell and Rock (1963 p. 83) and the Alpine Club (1963 pp. 343-4).

This book titled "LURE OF THE MOUNTAINS" by Michael D Lowes, is published by Vertebrate Publishing, pp. 156, £12.99



THE WAY AHEAD - Roy Denney

The decision is made and many find it hard to EU-logise over it. Most people think it was a 'devil or deep blue sea' scenario. We are now in the process of leaving the EU but not I hope Europe. I would like to think our decision will eventually lead to a better scenario for the other peoples of Europe.

For better or worse this decision will now shape our lives for the foreseeable future and determine many aspects of how things are handled. Speaking as an environmentalist and campaigner for the protection of our wild places and the ecology they support, I can only hope that the powers that be are on my wavelength. The support for the environment that came out of our contribution to the European budget can still be forthcoming direct from our own government.

I have written over the years about the increasing recognition that our ecosystem is dysfunctional due to man's interference and on the growing momentum for re-wilding. First tentative moves have been made down this road but there is much resistance to every step taken.

One of the big arguments about restoring landscape to how it was is to which point in history do you try and return. To some extent this then determines which creatures could realistically be returned to areas where they have long been missing.

Till about 3000 BC the British Isles was covered by rainforest with very few areas treeless apart from

our highest summits. Come forward a few years and you would have seen progressive clearing of these woodlands, the keeping of domesticated animals and some agriculture. The heavy grazing and reduced tree cover inevitably led to the subsequent loss of soils.

Going back further to before the last ice age the country was problem more mixed with a larger variety of animals which would themselves have nibbled away quite literally at the forestation giving more open glades etc. The bigger and slower herbivores were pushed south by the ice, then hunted to extinction in what was left of habitable Europe. In some ways that would be the most attractive time to revert to as the climate was not dissimilar to what we had fifty years ago before we started polluting to the extent we do today. It would be impractical though to replicate the wild life prevailing then as it would include some hardly compatible with humans in our present numbers. Would you want elephants, hippos, rhinos, hyenas, scimitar cats and lions for neighbours? We could perhaps manage to share our existence with lynx and wolves though and they would keep deer in some check preventing the damage they do due to their numbers.

We now live in a very different world; farmed lowlands are largely devoid of the habitats where most wild creatures could thrive and in the upper areas, the land is largely infertile and the weather inclement. There are some extensive forests in Britain but it still amounts to only just over 12%

and a lot of the woodlands are coniferous and support few other species. Left to its own devices nature would restore our uplands to how they were a few thousand years ago. We would see much more scrub and pockets of trees which would hold back water run-off and change the surface to more water retentive soils which would support more diversity by way of plants, birds and the insects and other life-forms they feed off.

EU subsidies have in recent years encouraged the keeping of sheep on the hills in densities that denude our uplands. They are very partial to tree seedlings, meaning there are no young trees coming along to replace the old ones. Ballooning numbers of deer have the same effect and the burning of grouse moors is arguably also adding to this problem. Heather and moorland management this way does help a number of bird species as a by-product of the grouse shooting industry but it also prevents saplings from taking hold.

Without sheep farming our hills would be less manicured and perhaps less attractive or easy to enjoy but this is a loss-making activity and there is no doubt it contributes to our watersheds being largely destroyed, lowlands being flooded and much of our wildlife being wiped out.

It is hard to see risk-averse authorities readily buying into re-wilding to reverse this process. The argument to reintroduce beavers is dragging on interminably. Pockets of protection exist but to be effective we need widespread restoration of lost eco-systems and the reintroduction of a number of once resident but now missing species. Certainly the beavers should be encouraged, the boar accepted, lynx and wolves reintroduced, and big efforts made to provide the habitat for other creatures just hanging on. We still have colonies of Scottish wildcats, polecats, pine martens, black grouse, capercaillie, ospreys, eagles, harriers and goshawks but all are struggling.

Massive efforts are underway to restore the moorlands of Kinder, and in other similar areas we should plant pockets of trees and moorland vegetation, taking seed from local sources. Fencing will also be needed as has been done on Kinder to prevent damage from grazing animals.

If genetic strength is to be maintained, isolated wilder places are not the answer. There have to be green corridors allowing creatures to migrate and intermix and ideally blocks should provide

different habitations alongside each other which on an island probably means uplands running down to the sea. This is perfectly possible in many parts of Britain. Scotland, Wales, Cumbria, Northumberland and North Yorkshire have areas where this is easily possible and Devon and Cornwall.

The EU has a good ethos of environmental protection but it is overly bureaucratic and inflexible at times and often ignores local situations. Red squirrels abound in Europe so they are not afforded much attention although in England they are rapidly becoming extinct. Environmental concerns do need to be balanced with some common sense but whenever development monies are on the table, do we trust any politicians, home grown or otherwise, not to take side of the house builders. National infrastructure is essential but power lines can be buried rather than have pylons everywhere. Even the wind turbine industry acknowledges now that land-based units can only ever be successful in England with subsidy. However many wilder areas are now disfigured by them. We surely must protect our environment but the other side of the coin however is that conservation measures could curtail our hard won freedom to wander many of our uplands.

Personally I do not like the term conservation. I take this to mean preserving the status quo. I feel we need to restore the situation, undo some damage we have caused and then protect the environment whilst allowing it to evolve by natural process.

Regardless of the outcome we now have to live with since Brexit was triggered, there is no doubt that finances are stretched and public services will still have to be cut. Of the many millions we paid into the EU quite a bit came back to support farmers and landowners. There is a strong case the retention of some subsidies, but they must be targeted towards ecological restoration especially moorland watersheds, woodlands and waterways and the wildlife they support as well as access to allow the public to enjoy these. DEFRA must give more authority to Natural England and the Environment Agency to allow them to effectively resist vested interests. Local Authorities could play more of a part and I am not sure our National Park Authorities are as effective as they could be.

THE GRANDE ANELLO DEI SIBILLINI

Richard Josephy

The Grande Anello dei Sibillini, in the Italian Appennines, is a circuit of the Monti Sibillini of about 140Km, mainly between 1000m and 1700m height, with about 6000m of ascent.

This basic route can easily be done in about 8 days, but there are many opportunities to extend it with routes up to some of the Sibillini peaks which are between 2000 and 2400m.

The walking is generally quite easy, on old mule tracks or on hill paths, sometimes sketchy and always blessedly free of the erosion we have got used to in this country. There are a few sections on quiet lanes. The lower parts of the walk are often through beech woods, the higher ones over rolling limestone hills with magnificent views.

The GAS goes through two largish villages, Visso and Fiastra, both at the north end of the loop. Here there is a choice of accommodation, but elsewhere it is in rifugi or B&Bs in sleepy hamlets. The rifugi are not mountain huts but usually very comfortable and well equipped hostels providing a warm welcome and excellent meals. Some of them have quite restricted opening dates, so you need to plan carefully if intending to use them.

The GAS is not much walked and not very well known to foreign visitors. I did it, with an old university friend, in late May/early June 2016 and we met very few others doing the walk and on some days none at all. It does get busier in July and August when the weather can be very hot. We took 11 days over the walk, to include a couple of extensions and stopping two nights in three places to do some interesting day walks.

Some highlights:

- The wild flowers – not really a highlight, as we were among them every day. There are an enormous variety including many orchids, some of which I am still trying to identify from photos.
- The Gole dell' Infernaccio, a splendid limestone gorge, which we did as one of our extra days.
- The ascent of Monte Sibilla, another of our extra days. Near the top is the cave of the Appennine Sibyl. You can now only penetrate a small distance because of a collapse – probably a good thing as those who went in and fell for the Sibyl's charms were doomed to remain until Judgement Day.
- The traverse of the southwestern ridges of the Sibillini, with views west over the Vale of Norcia and east across the Piangrande of Castelluccio.
- The visit to Castelluccio itself (an extension to the main route) an isolated village at 1450m perched above the Piangrande, famous for its lentils and the display of wild flowers in the lentil fields in early June. Unfortunately, because of an unusually cold spring, we were too early to see the best of the latter. Our other slight disappointment here was that we had the only poor weather of the whole trip – drizzle and low cloud – and decided against our planned walk across the Monte Vettore ridge to Lago di Pilato, where Pontius Pilate was drowned (allegedly).

The warmth and helpfulness of the local people was memorable. Everywhere we stayed we felt like guests rather than customers. One example was at Visso where our landlady got her friend the custodian to open the museum specially for us before we set off for the day's walk – it turned out to be a little gem.

When we arrived back at our campsite base near Preci, we were given a round of applause by the staff and wine on the house with our dinner. I suspect this was a result of our aged appearance rather more than the strenuousness of the walk.

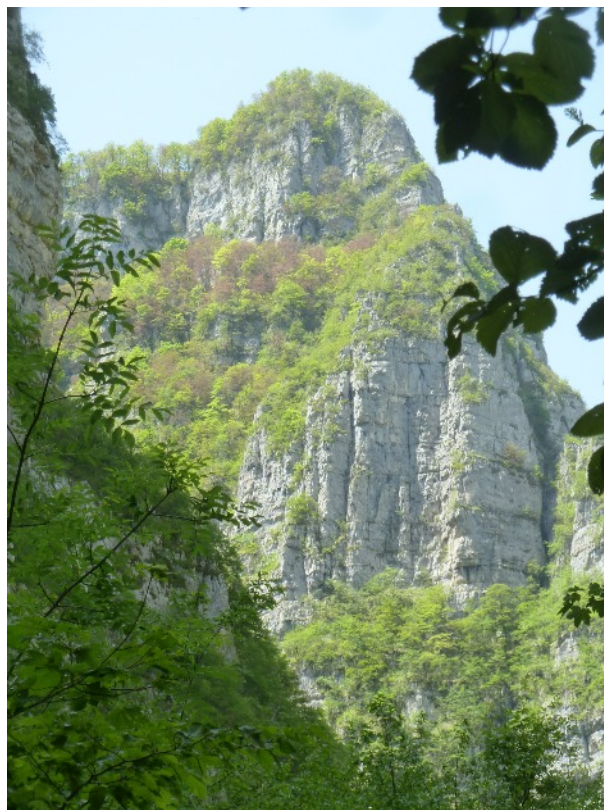
I can highly recommend the GAS to anyone who is looking for a reasonably energetic but not too demanding walk.

Some logistics:

The only English language guide to the Sibillini is that by Gillian Price, published by Cicerone.

The best map is “Parco Nazionale dei Monti Sibillini” published by Societa` Editrice Ricerche. It is on sale in the area, but not in this country as far as I know. A useful, though not always up to date website is www.sibillini.net.

The area is not well served by public transport, with bus services that are infrequent or non-existent. This was not a problem for us as we drove from home, camping on the way. The nearest stations are at Terni and Spoleto with connections to Rome and Perugia respectively. Other feasible airports are those on the Adriatic coast: Ancona and Rimini.



Above the Gole dell'Infernaccio



On the way down from the western Sibillini.



Arriving at Pintura di Bolognola.



Garulla, a typical sleepy Sibillini hamlet.



On the slopes of Monte Moricone, looking towards Monte Vettore.



Near the source of the River Tenna



Approaching the top of Monte Sibilla



The north-eastern Sibillini, after leaving Fiastra.

A sad postscript, November 2016.

In the recent earthquakes, many of the villages and hamlets were devastated. In particular, Visso and Norcia were very badly hit, and Castelluccio is now little more than a heap of rubble. Some paths are said to be impassable because of rockfalls. Hence, anyone planning to visit the area should do some research in advance to see if it is feasible.

ALPINE MEET, BEAUFORT-SUR-DORON, SAVOIE

30th July to 13th August 2016

The idea for this meet came from the meet leader, Alister Renton who had visited the area both in winter and summer. Besides identifying the best-placed caravan and campsite he found a large rustic chalet for those preferring something more solid over their heads, complete with resident female cat and her three kittens. Both places were a little down valley from Beaufort-sur-Doron, a delightful village above Albertville and southwest of Mont Blanc. This was an inspired choice of base giving easy access to several walking, mountaineering and mountain biking areas besides the local sport climbing and via ferrata crags.

Thirteen made it to the meet with Tony and Val Penny having to withdraw on the eve of the start after one had a thankfully minor swimming accident. The ages of the attendees ranged from 4 to 70 with half being in the lower half of that range. All were active in the hills with some sport climbing and mountain biking as well. As ever the meet was sociable with different groupings heading out each day and with two grand get-togethers for barbecues.

We were blessed with good weather and only one day was blighted by heavy rain showers and that day coincided with an antiques market in the village. A couple of guests visited the factory to see production of the famous Beaufort cheese while the rest of us settled for repeated samplings of the product with chunks of baguette longue.

Mountaineering activities

Sandwiched between the better-known massifs of Mont Blanc and the Dauphine Alps, the mountains of the Beaufortain Alps remain much less visited in the summer months. The complex geology of the area provides diverse ecology and the resultant wide variety of flora we encountered were superb. There were plenty of butterflies too. A few marmots and chamois were seen, but no bouquetin. The availability of car access to a number of high cols and a couple of open chair lifts facilitated a variety of interesting day hikes and scrambles to the summits of different mountains, one having an excellent via ferrata.

Use was made of two older English guidebooks (Walking in the Tarentaise and Beaufortin Alps, JW Akitt, Cicerone, 1995.

Summits For All - The French Alps, Edouard Prevost, 1991, Cordee) and one newer French guide (Le Guide Rando: Beaufortain, Philippe Gachet, 2012).

The area was covered by two IGN 1-25k sheets: 3531OT and 3532OT; an excellent, free French mapping app called iPhiGénie allowed these to be viewed and cached on our tablets and smart phones – it's recommended to anyone heading to France.

The summits and routes taken are summarised below:

31st July – An afternoon walk up the hill behind the chalet was enlivened by coming across a primitive sort of bothy. The younger element extended the outing and reaching a top and creating a rough descent not evident on the map or, in places, on the ground.

1st Aug - Tête Nord des Fours (2756m)

Above Beaufort, the Plan de la Lai is a broad platform reached by road and we headed north east to the precipitous Crêtes des Gittes ridged traversed by an old military mule track. We met several mountainbikers en-route to the Refuge de

la Croix de Bonhomme for their descent. Further up, a couple of large snow patches were encountered just below the Tête Nord des Fours summit.

2nd Aug - Mont Coin (2539m)

We drove up from Areche and took the very rough track to the popular picnic spot of the Lac des Fees to begin our ascent on foot to the Cormet d'Areche col. One party ascended to Mont Coin via the Col du Coin and descended by the narrow and sinuous NNW ridge. The other climbed the SW ridge, both parties arriving back at the lake at the same time, but none saw the fairies. Meanwhile Richard soloed up the Grand Mont from the Lac des Fees via the Col de la Lauze and then descended to Areche after a long day.

3rd Aug - Pointe de la Grande Journée (2460m)

The chair lift from Le Planey was used to aid our ascent to the Refuge des Arolles. We traversed to the Col de la Bâthie and climbed to the rocky summit of the Pointe de la Grande Journée. One party descended the narrow SW ridge, the other group followed a different route into the S combe before meeting at a stream where several cooled their feet. A welcome beer was had at the Refuge before taking the lift back down before it closed.

4th Aug - Roc du Vent (2329m) Via Ferrata

The Plan de la Lai provides access to the Roc du Vent via ferrata, the only one in the area. This interesting 2km route is equipped with some 900m of cable and a 20m Nepali bridge. An hour's walk saw us gearing up at the start of the cabling to begin following another party up the exposed and slabby S ridge. This led to a flat grassy top with views over lunch to Mont Blanc in the distance and large colonies of edelweiss and blue gentians.

A cabled descent then led to a rocky defile and a strenuous climb up a vertical section the other side, then across another top and down to the wire bridge.

Spectacularly situated with fine views down to the Lac de la Gittaz barrage below, concentration was needed to maintain motion along the cables without swaying too much. Safely across, the final section was a protected descent down to a mined tunnel for a spot of caving, where head-torches were required to negotiate the 100m back to daylight. A very good day out and recommended to anyone in the area.

6th Aug - Legette de Mirantin (2353m)

SW of Beaufort the road climbs up to several alpages and their chalets. We parked at Les Choseaux and began to follow a route that had been marked out for the Mont Mirantin fell race taking place the same day. Leaving the marker flags at Lac Couvert, narrow paths led us to a pleasant traverse over the Roche Plane to its eponymous col. Here an even less trodden path soon vanished into rocks and scree as we began to ascend the NE flank of the Legette de Mirantin. After (wrongly) rejecting a route up a leftwards diagonal couloir, our line became steeper and looser, then dangerously loose, finally necessitating steps to be kicked in the mud and shale flakes before the summit was gained. Fortunately, a more straightforward descent was found back down steep grassy slopes the across to Lac Couvert to join our upward route.

7th Aug - Roche Parstire (2109m)

An easier day was enjoyed from the Col du Pré roadhead over the Roche Parstire and along the ridge to the Passage de la Charmette col to descend back to the car via the sentier botanique.

8th Aug - Mont Joly (2525m)

Departing from the Col du Joly, we climbed steeply up to the Aiguille Croche (2487m) whilst admiring the long ridge in front of us, seamed by gullies. This was followed NE for over 4km to Mont Joly, the closest we got to Mont Blanc. On the way, we passed several large diameter pipes emerging from the ground with down-turned ends connected by buried pipes to a central station having oxygen and propane cylinders. These turned out to be Gasex avalanche control cannons. From Mont Joly's summit, the views over the Tré la Tête glacier to the Aiguilles de Bionassay and Mont Blanc were stupendous - parties on the Bosses Ridge and the Dômes de Miages could clearly be seen through binoculars. Regretfully, we eventually turned our eyes away and headed back along the ridge and down the meadows to the car park.

9th Aug - Lacs de Trepête

We parked beside Lac de Guerin in uncertain weather and walked up to the Col de la Lauze (2119m) observed by two perched Griffon vultures and then W down to the first tarn of the Lacs de Trepête, returning the same way. The highlight was a close encounter with another vulture as it flew past only some 30m away above the lake.

10th Aug - Crêt du Rey (2633m)

We had a cool and cloudy start at the Cornet d'Areche as we followed a path across the pastures to the sinuous ridge leading up to the Crêt du Rey, watched by a large herd of bell-ringing cows beside their mobile milking shed. The NE ridge was pleasantly airy and led up to the summit where we continued down the S ridge and across to the Col du Cornes Noir and back past the cows.

11th Aug - Le Grand Mont (2686m)

Our last route used the only other open chair lift which is from Areche to Cuvy. We ascended past the charred ruins of the Refuge de l'Alpage, burnt to the ground earlier in the year and up to the Col de la Forclaz. Then a boulder field and more rocks were crossed to the summit of Le Grand Mont and its small solar powered weather station to enjoy our last views of Mont Blanc before returning the same way to enjoy a celebratory beer back in Areche.

A number of other walks were made around reservoirs or up valleys by those wanting quieter days. The area is well served with seats or grassy banks giving views which warrant a long sit and stare.

Mountainbiking

A couple of full days were spent mountain biking. One involved a number of demanding road-less cols in the area of Mont Coin and the other made use of a bus to reach Les Saisies

Road cycling

The Rentons made a number of cycle outings. The longest was towards the end of the meet when Alister and Neev cycled 57 km in 7 hours on their 1966 tandem, taking in some epic Tour de France climbs along the way to make 1,841m ascent in all. Going up one of the hills a check of 7-year-old Neev's blood sugar level found an oral injection of jelly babies and a fruit pastille was needed before they could continue. Their determination to live life to the full is to be admired.

Sport climbing

Beaufort village has its own south-facing bolted crag, Falaise de Beaufort, conveniently close to the parking, leaving a walk-in of just 130m. Several visits were made, usually in the evenings once the sun had left it. A couple of the twenty routes on the right at 3 gave a gentle introduction then

working left there were 4s and 5s. Richard managed one of the latter at the second attempt after his trainers failed to provide enough grip on a high bare steep section and he glissaded backwards gracefully. The highest grade climbed was one of the 6as.

The most amusing descent was 4-year-old Iona's after a top-roped clean onsight ascent. The transition to being lowered off proved too uninviting so she sat on a high ledge swinging her legs looking unconcerned. Ma had to shin up a parallel route, swing across, grab the back of her harness and descend with Iona dangling like a bag of shopping. Iona was not the youngest on the crag.

After a scramble up the left-hand edge of the crag, Beth was introduced to via ferrata techniques and moving roped on a well-protected long and winding route up three crags. Chains, wires, bolts and pigtails clearly identify the route which takes in a ridge, tower, steps across gaps, dièdre, chimney, traverses, mantleshelf, a short descent and face climbing on rungs. After ending the tour at a station of the cross, the descent path passes the Gendarmerie. Not included in the crag's topo (available free from Tourist Information) are a number of tree-shaded bolted routes on the higher tiers though these were not clean like the bottom crag.

Other attractions

The distinctive local produce was incorporated into many of the group's meals including the Beaufort cheese which was even available from a vending machine in case supplies were required outside shop hours.

The local market proved popular one wet morning with stall holders offering for sale a wide range of rural curiosities. There were also a number of mountaineering texts and photographs of interest. Needless to say the several local coffee shops were also frequented.

The young employed attendees could only manage one week but they packed a lot into that week and flew in and out to maximise their time in the mountains. Those having more time available drove down with most taking the same Hull-Zeebrugge overnight ferry

and getting to the chalet in less than 30 hours from home. They split the return journey with overnight stops in either Troyes or Metz. The Rentons had a third week in Malbuisson in the French Jura on their way home.

Once again the alpine meet was a success. The area gave plenty to do with a variety of interesting routes and activities – well chosen, Alister, thanks for arranging the meet there. Many days we had good views of Mont Blanc's southern side which provided a suitable excuse to sit and stare. Picking out the various routes on it and its surrounding peaks – even spotting some of the climbers – prompted recollections of some members' earlier ascents. The daily strenuous activity was good preparation for the two who were soon to be heading to the Himalayas. These meets certainly deserve their place in the Club's meet list.

M Smith

Attending were:

Mick Borroff
David Hick
Christine Marriott (guest)
Beth Marriott (guest)
Alister Renton (meet organiser)
Jane Renton (guest)
Neev Renton (guest)
Iona Renton (guest)
Helen Smith
Michael Smith
Richard Smith
Fiona Smith (guest)
Dave Booker (guest)



Joly Ridge



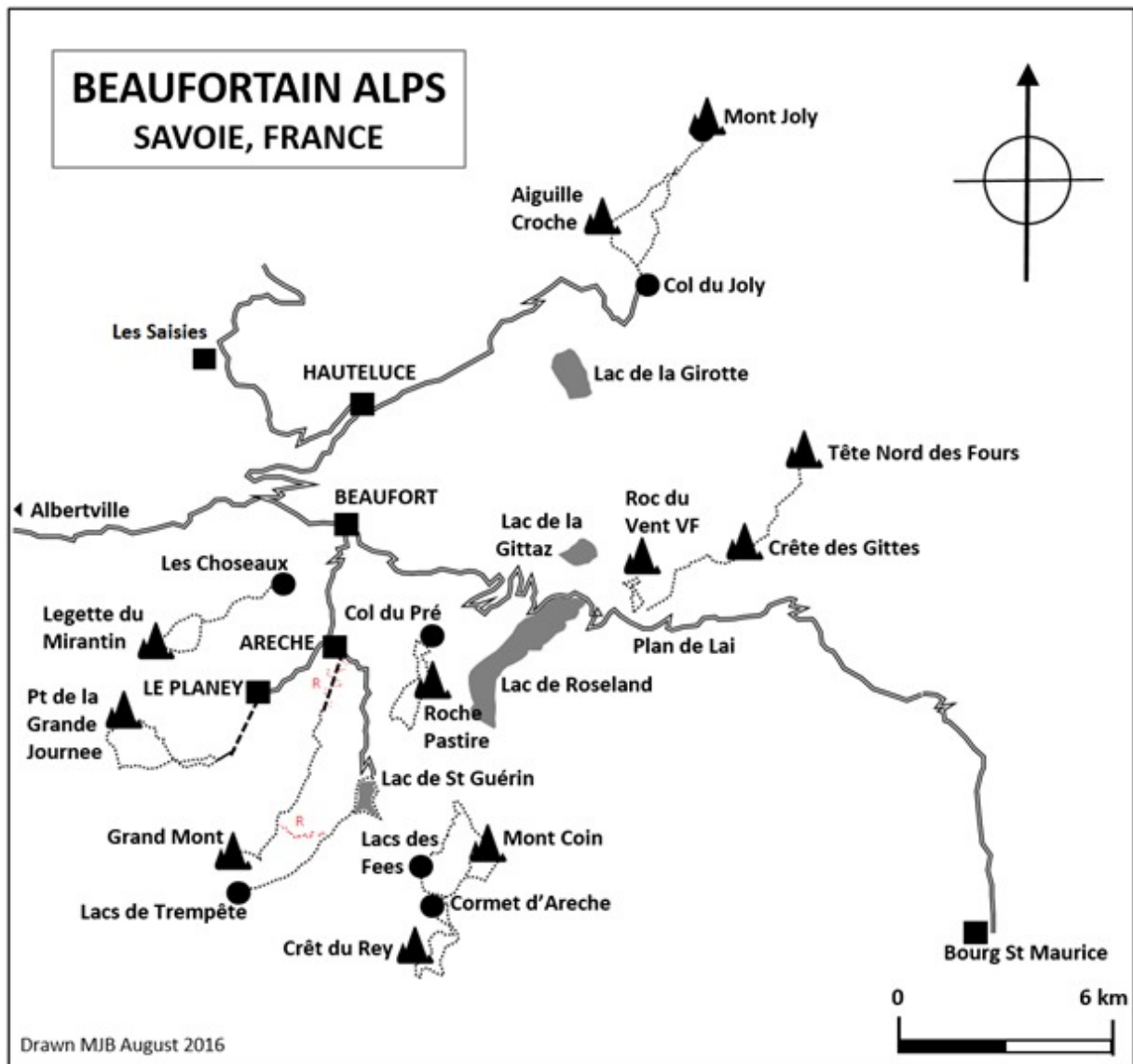
The flank of the Legette de Mirantin



Joly Ridge
monument



Grand
Mont



WEED OR WILD?

What is a weed to one man is a wild flower to another and at the end of the day a weed is just a plant growing in the wrong place. We occasionally have articles on botany going into detail about wild plants but not often about what are normally thought of as garden plants. All our plants did originate somewhere in the wild although often much altered by selective breeding. This is an article about the not so humble tulip and its origins a long way from our gardens. It is a brief account of a fascinating excursion researching the origins of the iconic tulip, one of our most beautiful spring garden plants and an ever popular cut-flower.

HIDDEN GEMS AMONGST THE MIGHTY TIEN-SHAN MOUNTAINS

John & Valerie Middleton

THE MOUNTAINS.

The Tien-Shan, or 'Celestial Mountains' as they are more popularly known, are part of the northernmost Himalayan belt of hills that began to form when the Indian and Eurasian plates collided some 55 million years ago. Since that point in time a 2,800km long range of stunning snow-capped summits and dazzling valleys has steadily developed that extends from the 'Bogda-Shan', just east of Urumqi in the Xinjiang Province of China, westwards to Tashkent the capital city of Uzbekistan.

A major part of this mountain building occurred between 7 and 2.5 million years ago. The highlands are now so substantial that they form almost impenetrable country boundaries for parts of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The average height of the range is around 4,000m and includes two challenging peaks that exceed 7,000m - these being 'Jengish Chokusu' in Kyrgyzstan at 7,439m and 'Khan Tengri' on the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan at 7,010m. To the south the Tien-Shan merges with the Pamir Mountains whilst to the north-east it connects with the Mongolian Altai chain.

Continuous permafrost exists upwards from around 3,500m with glaciers becoming a familiar part of the landscape. Unfortunately these are currently estimated to be losing more than 25% of their volume each year. This rate seems to be more than that of glaciers found elsewhere in the Himalayan orogenic belt. Discontinuous permafrost can be found down to 2,500m which obviously affects the flora. Great canyons are a further characteristic of the Tien-Shan particularly within Kazakhstan. Most notable here are the Charyn and Aksu Canyons. The former is 80km in length with an average depth of 200m whilst the latter is up to 500m deep but only 18km in length. We were privileged to visit both these impressive features and their associated flora.

Finally, the Tien-Shan has spawned two major rivers. The Ili River commences at the very eastern extremity of the Tien-Shan range in China where the Tekes and Kunges rivers join. The resulting river is 1,439km long (815km in Kazakhstan) with this finally filtering away in the extensive, shallow and salty Lake Balkhash. The second major river is the Syr Darya which commences in Kyrgyzstan and flows for 2,212km through parts of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to terminate in the much reduced Aral Sea.

TULIPS.

The instantly recognisable and stunningly beautiful Tulip may be found growing wild throughout most countries of Europe, in North-west Africa, in Asia Minor and throughout Central Asia. It occurs as seventy eight very different species together with a much smaller number of local sub-species and forms.

The greatest concentration of these species is to be found in Kazakhstan (36), Uzbekistan (28), Iran (23), Turkey (15) and Kyrgyzstan (11). Other countries are usually host to species numbers in the low single figures.

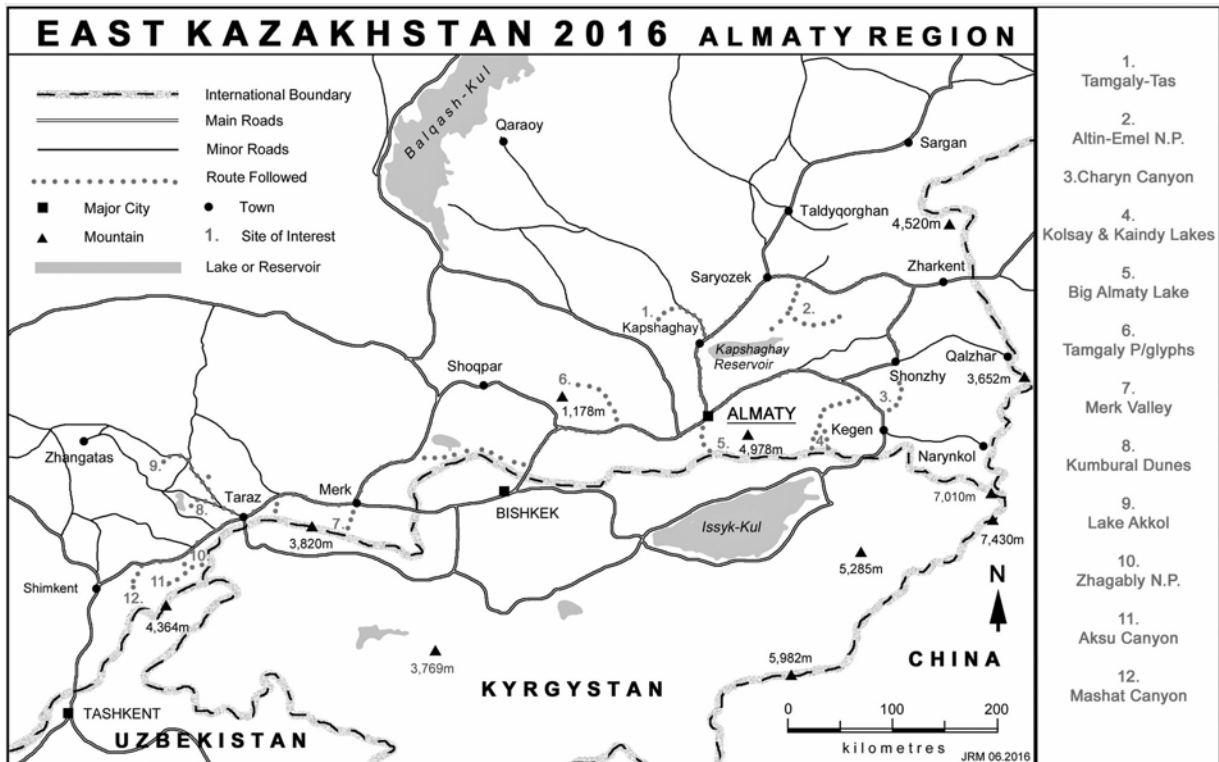
Whilst it can be seen that the genus *Tulipa* is widely spread it was little appreciated in Europe until the mid-fifteenth century when word reached Western countries... *that the Turks cultivated tulips which were admired for the variety and beauty of their colours, and that they paid considerable sums for exceptional flowers* (note 1).

Merchants were quick to introduce supplies but not all countries, with the notable exception of the Dutch, were impressed – the *Germans considered the flowers rather 'ugly' and the English associated them with elves and fairies!* (Note 2). However in Holland the Tulip instantly became fashionable. So much so that by 1637... *some single bulbs could sell for 10 times the annual income of a skilled craftsman* (note 3) This 'bubble' or 'Tulip mania' as it was later called soon burst but the Dutch retained their passion for the flower and by a process of selective breeding many hundred named varieties were produced. The Dutch still dominate this market today and with the advances in hybridisation and stem culture the number of showy cultivars now number well into the thousands.

Whilst we personally consider tulips to be highly ornamental we have always thought the much smaller, daintier and often more exotic pure species types to be far more interesting. So, when Alexander, our guide and driver during our 2015 Kazakhstan desert excursion, showed us his photographs we just had to see them. He readily agreed to put together a mini expedition and in April of 2016 we three set off for the central part of the Tien-Shan Mountains that follow much of Kazakhstan's eastern border. We are sure that many members of the 'Yorkshire Ramblers Club' will say "*hmmm, interesting but we are hardy walkers and mountaineers*" – well, just see where our travels took us!

¹ Diana Everett, p1. ² IYB-2010, p25. ³ Wikipedia, *Tulip Mania*, p1.

BRIEF HIGHLIGHTS OF TULIP HUNTING IN KAZAKHSTAN, APRIL 2016



Our journey commenced in Almaty, a clean and interesting multicultural city of some 1.7 million people that nestles beneath the ever present peaks of the Tien-Shan range. Until 1997 Almaty was also the capital of Kazakhstan however the government then moved to the more modern metropolis of Astana situated over a thousand kilometres to the north. The city stands at an average elevation of 800m but within an hour it is possible to ascend dizzying roads that extend well beyond the tree line. One very well used road takes winter sports enthusiasts to the Chimbuluk Resort at 2,260m where ski lifts ascend for a further 800m. Another heads for the Big Almaty Lake and onwards to reach almost 3,500m, snow permitting.

Once out of the urban areas, either on the steppe or in the mountains, excellent wild walking beckons the adventurous as fences and other barriers are virtually unknown.

For anyone not wishing to partake of so much fresh air then an hour's drive to the north lays Kapshagay with its 2km long Las Vegas style 'strip' of flamboyant Casinos. This is one of only two licensed areas in Kazakhstan where gambling is legal.

FIRST DAY.

We left the city at dawn and headed east on a road that spectacularly paralleled the mountains. This in itself was exciting but within an hour the route diverged. To the left the sign said 'China', to the right it pointed to 'Kyrgystan'. We took the latter which progressed through a gorge and then onto a deviation for our first break at the 'Valley of Castles'



This well-known geological site proved to be a sandstone subsidiary gorge of the great 'Charyn Canyon' that had been eroded into a multitude of spectacular towers.

We then roughly followed the main ravine across the steppe for almost an hour with many excursions taking us to its very edge.



Charyn Canyon

In 1969 this river canyon was part of a disputed border with the Chinese which resulted in a seven month undeclared military conflict. Various bullet-battered Pill boxes remain witness to this event and the underlying issues were apparently not resolved until the '1991 Sino- Soviet Border Agreement'.

Our objective for the day was to visit the two mountain lakes of Kaindy (1,875m) and Kolsay (2,260m) situated about an hour's drive apart. The former can only be reached in a four-wheel drive vehicle as it involves a rough track, river crossings, steep hills and unexpected bends. In the light shade of the birch woodlands that we passed through we spotted masses of the delightful *Tulipa dasystemon* growing amongst various iris, primulas, Red Squirrels and overhead, a pair of Rough-legged Buzzards. This lovely tulip, just 12cm high, has tepals a rich yellow within and an exterior showing streaks of green (photo 03). Once reached the lake is of particular interest as its existence only came into being some 60 years ago due to a large landslide that totally blocked the valley. This features origin can be clearly seen on 'Google Earth' at N 42°59'23.61" E 78°29'10.73" alt. 2,550m. Skeletons of the old spruce trees still remain standing in the water.



These trees now create a distinctly eerie atmosphere to this unfortunate but otherwise beautiful valley.

The drive to the Lake Kolsay is rough but suitable for normal vehicles and ascends past open meadows to a forest of endemic spruce (*Picea schrenkiana*) shortly after which the placid waters of the lake are overlooked at the road's end. Lake Kolsay is one of three ascending lakes whose home valley extends to the Kyrgyzstan border. The flora along the hillsides above the lake is exceptional and, amongst the many interesting plants, it yielded a second miniature tulip in the stunning ruby-red and buttercup-yellow *Tulipa tetraphylla*. That night, exhausted, we slept in an immaculately clean local Park Ranger's family house. This is worthy of mention as entry is made under a storm porch where boots are left; then into a large gear, radio and clothes room; then through to a combined washroom, kitchen and dining room to be followed by the first bedroom through which the second bedroom is reached. This is perfectly acceptable unless it is necessary to get up during the night in which case it is almost impossible to do so without embarrassingly awaking the whole household. Added to this the 'long-drop' toilet is situated some 70 unlit metres away on the edge of a deep gorge!

THE MIDDLE.

We spent a further 16 days in south-eastern Kazakhstan where we came to learn how adaptable our little species tulips had become. Not only did we find them on mountainsides and alpine meadows we found them covering vast areas of the steppe just in the way buttercups dot our meadows (*Tulipa kolpakowskiana*); on the ancient desert sand dunes of Khumbural (*Tulipa lehmanniana*); in wet hollows and by streams (*Tulipa kaufmanniana*); on rocky mountain ledges (*Tulipa lemmersii*) and on steep stony scree slopes (*Tulipa orthopoda*).

In this central period of our excursions the undoubted highlight was a three day visit to the magnificent 'Aksu-Zhagably Nature Reserve'. This is the oldest established Nature Reserve in Central Asia covering 131,934 hectares and dating back to 1926. It ranges from 1,100m above sea level to 4,236m and has never suffered any depredation from grazing farm stock. The result is a pristine wilderness where Snow Leopards, White-toed Tien-Shan Bear, Siberian Stag, Siberian Goat and forty other highly endangered mammals roam. The flora is

comprised of an even greater richness with almost 1,400 different vascular plants recorded. We came across six different species of tulip here including *Tulipa greigii* with its very wide range of colours. This species, together with *Tulipa kaufmanniana*, is widely grown, with little improvement from the Dutch, in the gardens of England and Europe generally.

There is an almost total absence of vehicular tracks within the Reserve so the normal way to reach any desired destination is to hire one of the sturdy local horses. Travel is over rough open meadows, through scrub, marsh, across mountain streams which usually have very steep sides, up shale slopes and along the edges of deep gorges. All distinctly thrilling but we do have to admit to being barely able to stand upon our return after gripping onto our faithful horses for so long – probably not our favourite mode of transport! Our main excursion took us on a 16km circuit with two hours plant hunting at the furthest point.

Here we came across an unbelievable abundance of fritillaria, corydalis, iris, eremurus, primulas, gagea and, of course, tulips. A truly phenomenal place and all just below the spectacular snow covered slopes of the high mountains. Our second big adventure day was to the sublime Aksu Canyon. It is possible to either walk endlessly along its flower strewn edges or descend to the river via distinctly zig-zag tracks. We did both. Serenading bird songs constantly fill the air, soaring birds of prey take advantage of the rising thermals, butterflies and bees are everywhere and the occasional lizard or snake quickly merges into its surroundings. Aksu Zhagably is both a naturalist's paradise and an adventurers dream!

LAST DAY.

For our final excursion we chose the scenic Big Almaty Lake road and stopped for several hours at an area of superb alpine meadows situated just above the lake at 2,700m. Luxurious early season flowers and smells were in abundance and amongst the many gems that we identified was the diminutive and uncommon *Tulipa heterophylla* with its non-tulip like blooms that remain tilted to one side. Also in the vicinity was the equally beautiful but previously seen *Tulipa dasystemon*.

Other interesting plants noted were various alpine alchemilla, corydalis, gagea, primula and viola. The majority of plants seen at this altitude are inevitably tough and low growing in order for them to survive the harsh weather conditions. On our downward return journey we also spotted the white *Crocus alatavicus* huddling up close to fast disappearing snow patches and *Rheum maximoviczii*, a rather large local rhubarb growing on the nearby hillsides. Interestingly our own English rhubarb, *Rheum x hybridum*, originated from Central Asia as do some 60 other rhubarb species.

Rheum x hybridum was the result of crossing *Rheum palmatum* with *Rheum rhaponticum*.

Still further down the valley we investigated a very well run 'Raptor Farm' specialising in breeding birds of prey for both release into the wild and for sale to local hunters. The many impressively healthy birds within their unit include Lammergeyers, Griffin Vultures, Golden Eagles, various falcons, various hawks, Eagle Owls and others. For the Kazakh people hunting with birds is a national pastime. It is usually accomplished wearing traditional clothing, using Golden Eagles and riding horses – a rather impressive combination! Finally, in the late afternoon sunshine, we visited 'Panfilov Park' situated in the very city centre to admire the remarkable Russian Orthodox 'Cathedral of the Holy Ascension'. Not far from this masterpiece is an atmospheric memorial terrace dedicated to the 601,011 Kazakhstani people killed in the Second World War (Brummell p136).

The open area includes a large polished black marble slab with an eternal flame beneath a very imposing sculpture of Major General Panfilov's soldiers.



The whole is guarded by actively parading armed troops and overlooked by the icy Tien-Shan peaks. Such a setting proves irresistible for post-wedding photo-shoots of the Almaty elite as we ourselves witnessed.

This last day was a fitting climax to a trip that gave us a fascinating insight into the countries diverse culture, countryside and, of course, tulips. The final tally of species tulips that we had seen came to **20 out of a possible 36**. As tulips occur at differing times between late February and early May we considered this to be a perfectly respectable number!

REFERENCE MATERIAL.

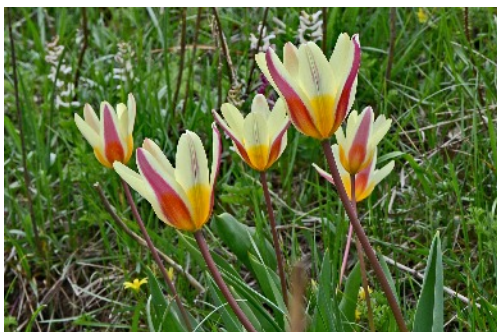
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- Gardner, Christopher & Gardner, Başak (2014, reprint 2015). **Flora of The Silk Road**. I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., London. pp406. *This magnificent publication is the result of 15 years work exploring the various branches of 'The Silk Road'. It shows superb photographs of a personal selection of 545 different plant species together with much local description.*
- IYB-2010 (International Year of Biodiversity 2010 Joint Publishing Project). **Tulips of Kazakhstan**. Almatykitap Baspassy, Almaty, Kazakhstan. pp272. *36 different species of the genus Tulipa have been recorded in Kazakhstan. This is a glossy photographic record of them all with the species details written in English, Kazakh and Russian.*
- Silk Road Adventures, Adi Sharipova Str, 117-44, 050012, Almaty, Kazakhstan. www.silkadv.com . A very reliable 'in country' travel service that can organise excursions, many highly unusual, to Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries. The web site is extremely informative although not everything is in English. The photographs are exceptional.



Aksu-Zhagably Nature Reserve'



T. lemmersii copyright of © Alexander Petrov.



T. kaufmanniana,
top

and

T. heterophylla
below



T. dasystemon,

FOOTNOTE.

Not only did we have an exciting time visiting the amazing places where tulips grow but we also had the privilege of mixing and living with several of the 120 different ethnic groups that inhabit Kazakhstan. For this we have to doubly thank Alexander for not only organising our trip but for freeing any inhibitions that we may have had about meeting the local people. Thank you Alexander.

TULIPS FOUND.

- Tulipa alberti*,
- T. behmiana*,
- T. biflora*,
- T. brachystemon*,
- T. buhseana*,
- T. corynestemon*,
- T. dasystemon*,
- T. greigii*,
- T. heterophylla*,
- T. kaufmanniana*,
- T. kolpakowskiana*,
- T. lehmanniana*,
- T. lemersii*,
- T. orthopoda*,
- T. ostrowskiana*,
- T. patens*,
- T. talijevii*,
- T. tetraphylla*,
- T. turkestanica* and
- T. zenaidae*.



NATURAL HISTORY



WILDLIFE, ECOLOGY AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

STATE OF BRITISH NATURE

Having spent far too much time visiting NHS establishments over the last two years, it was good to vanish down under for a couple of months missing out on some of our dreary winter. Given I also spent three fortnights last year in the Alps this report could have something of an international flavour but that is not what we are really about. Suffice to say I managed to get some walking and swimming in whilst in New Zealand and Grenoble and hope to actually start getting out and about and hill walking again err long.

Climate change is putting wildlife populations increasingly in peril as temperatures rise, and weather becomes more extreme. Warming average temperatures in Europe are pushing sea creatures, birds, bees and butterflies further north but unfortunately some nasty bugs as well.

Some native creatures have nowhere else to go and most plants cannot migrate fast enough. Alpine plants in our upland areas have are declining as they cannot go any higher so the vegetation we see when wandering the high places will slowly change. Many people and organisations are striving to help endangered species with some marked successes but there are probably more losers than winners. Creatures in urgent need of often costly assistance are slowly recovering but a lot more needs to be done.

With the seasons changing and species adapting at different rates, birds and different animal species are becoming out of sync with the insects and harvests on which they rely, which has an impact all up the food chain. The UK's Birds of Conservation Concern 'Red List' now stands at 67 species with 96 more species amber-listed. Not good when we have only 244 regularly species.

Of those I love to encounter when wandering wild places, our native curlew is struggling, down 12% in the last decade, although largely due to protection measures, its very rare relative the Stone Curlew has doubled in numbers over the last 25 years.

They visit in summer to breed in fields and need careful protection from farm machinery. The English (Grey) partridge was once widespread and very common, but its numbers have declined dramatically due to loss of habitat and shooting. It is a 'Red List' species. It is doing well at present in the new National Forest in the Midlands where farmland has been planted with young trees but with maturity, these woodlands will be less suitable.

Lapwings like cooler climates and we are seeing numbers heavily reduced. Changing agricultural methods and draining of damp grasslands has deprived them of much of their food source. The iconic Golden Eagle was many years ago seen throughout the UK, but they are now restricted to the uplands of Scotland where we have a fifth of all Western Europe's population. They are still persecuted by shooting interests and another raptor really struggling is the Hen Harrier – Usually found on moorland it is also heavily persecuted by grouse shooters. Breeding numbers are very low and the species is under sever threat (Red List) Another bird I used to hear rather than see is also badly in decline. The spring-visiting cuckoo is also on the Red List.

Insects and other invertebrates, comprising 97% of all animal species, are struggling badly, with over half being in steady decline with the draining of wetlands harming many species. These are nature's dustbin men, keeping soils healthy, and they are the lowest rung of the food chain on which all creatures depend.

We are seeing a number of new insects taking up residence in the UK. Often blown here in the past, it was too cold for them but colonies are now being established.

Not all are welcome, new larger wasps, hornets and ladybirds are a problem and numerous smaller nasties are attacking trees and shrubs. Ticks carrying dangerous diseases are now being found increasingly far north. There are some attractive immigrants however for example the small red-eyed damselfly

Roy Denney

WORRIES WORLD WIDE

The journals regularly include reports and articles about changes to the climate and the effect on environments. There seems little argument now that this change is happening and probably at a rate where most creatures will find it hard to adapt. The argument now seems to be what is the cause, is it our fault and can we do anything about it.

Perhaps the most obvious sign of change to us in our endeavours, apart from more extreme weather generally, is the lack of snow and ice conditions to any real extent in Cumbria and North Yorkshire and the retreating glaciers we see in the great ranges.

We have previously reported on the rising temperatures which are melting some of the ice on approaches to many Himalayan summits. Climbers are often struggling to get a grip on the newly exposed rock where their crampons are little use on these surfaces. The melting ice has increased many other risks as it has also exposed deep crevasses and increased danger from outburst floods of glacial melt water.

University College London reported back in 2010 that the Himalayan glaciers were retreating faster than most others around the world. The Kolhai glacier in Kashmir, one of the largest in the Himalayas, had receded by almost 22 metres in 2007 while several smaller glaciers had disappeared completely.

Closer to home and back in 2008 we learned that Switzerland with about 1,800 glaciers, was seeing most of them retreating. The Alpine glaciers are a major source of water not only in Switzerland but also for the whole of western Europe.

Swiss Radio International reported then that back in 1802, a young J. M. W. Turner picked a spot in the French Chamonix Valley with a fine view of Mont Blanc's Mer de Glace and started to sketch it.

More than two hundred years later a young Swiss geographer, armed with Turner's drawing, searched the glacial terrain to find the same place where the artist once stood.

Comparing Turner's landscape with the present day view, he was able to determine quite accurately the position of the Mer de Glace glacier at that time and even then the retreat was dramatic.

Nature can learn to adapt to widely differing conditions but it needs time.

PROTECTION FOR WOODLANDS

The Government's Housing White Paper includes one very encouraging element as far as the environment goes. It recognises the need for enhanced protection for ancient woodland and aged and veteran trees in England.

As development pressures have mounted these have increasingly been destroyed and they can never be replaced. It is not just the trees but the whole eco system they support which has developed over many centuries.

The Woodland Trust knows of over 700 cases at present where such woods are threatened by proposed developments.

Under the suggestions in the white paper, planners would have to treat ancient woodlands and veteran trees as being of as much importance as National Parks, SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and green belts meaning developments affecting them should be restricted.

HIGH BORROWDALE

Borrow Beck burbling its way down from High Borrowdale was once described by Wainwright as being in the most beautiful valley outside the Lake District but is now within the extended National Park.

Volunteers organised by the Friends of the Lake District have restored two upland hay meadows and two barns; protected a derelict farm house, re-built a couple of miles of dry stone walling and planted thousands of ash, oak, rowan, holly, hawthorn, alder and willow.

This should help biodiversity and also call a halt to erosion caused by several recent landslides.

DOWN UNDER

Roy Denney

In Richards piece on Italy he noted the recent destruction of places he had just visited and enjoyed. That rather mirrors my experiences in New Zealand in recent years.

Here in the UK we have bad floods and high winds but few major natural disasters. We have far more tornados and earthquakes than many imagine but not of any severity. Nor do we have any active volcanoes but there is plenty of evidence of a more dramatic past. Charnwood Forest here in Leicestershire straddles what is left of what was Europe's largest volcano but all we see now is a large circle of small outcrops of sharp rocks which were once part of the rim.

We have several small fault lines across Britain causing minor earth tremors from time to time one being where Scotland pushes into England as long ago they were separate entities. Nothing like as dramatic as where the continental plates of Oceania and Australasia grind against each other.

The magnificent Mt. Cook range in New Zealand owes it existence to this but it also accounts for the all too frequent major quakes.

Seal basking on rocks now buried under half a mountain



Ancient nursery for young seals in stream by coast. Now choked by boulders



This was once a footbridge!



Christchurch Cathedral before and after



City Centre Devastation

Having family in both Australia and NZ, I am a fairly frequent visitor and having been there six months before Christchurch's big one and back a year later it was extremely depressing. There are these and many more lovely areas, magnificent buildings and dramatic coastal scenes which are gone forever and cannot be recreated.

The inhabitants are however a hardy breed and very resilient. Christchurch is raising from the ashes so to speak, and is again a fairly vibrant city. I do not like many of the new modern buildings and they will never recreate the old colonial charm and I would have preferred planners to set better standards, but the city is now open for business again.

During our last visit in late 2016 the earth moved again whilst we were in bed. It had been our intention to take the coastal railway up south island and the ferry to Wellington, a city we have not seen. It was not to be - that railway is the only one going north and millions of tons of mountainside have been dumped across it just outside Kaikoura and the ferry port was temporarily put out of action. Wellington itself whilst much further from the epicentre than we were in Christchurch, was badly affected by the latest quake.

Kaikoura is entirely dependent on tourists coming to see the sperm whales in the deep water trench just off shore and whilst the tourist industry has taken a major hit, losing a season, before we left they had the good news that the seasonal visit of these leviathans was taking place despite the major changes to the sea bed and coast.

The biggest problem they face is that the sea bed has risen and the whale tourist boats can not get out until channels are dredged.

If you have never had the privilege of going out to see (and at times almost touch) these magnificent creatures I can commend it to you



Kaikoura 2009 trip

Son John is being kept pretty busy as he heads a team playing a big part in redesigning the road and cycle ways network.

There is much to admire in the way the city and suburbs are being reshaped but it will never be the same again. There are three major suburban areas which have been abandoned for the foreseeable future. They probably housed about 10,000 people before the quakes but the infrastructure damage, the cost of restoration and the probability of a reoccurrence is too much. The properties have been demolished with topsoil and grass over their sites and these are now large areas of attractive parkland.

The only give away to what was there are the trees left in place which were once part of the hedgerows separating properties. They are now in unusual square patterns.

For every home lost they have built new ones further out on what was farmland and geographically Christchurch is now much bigger. Britain could learn a thing or two about building thousands of homes quickly.

One thing that did catch my eye was a magnificent kiddies play area by the river in central Christchurch. It had every sort of play equipment I have ever seen and many more including water cannons which amused the little ones and, as there were directable, kept us on our toes. It even had a climbing wall for the toddlers.

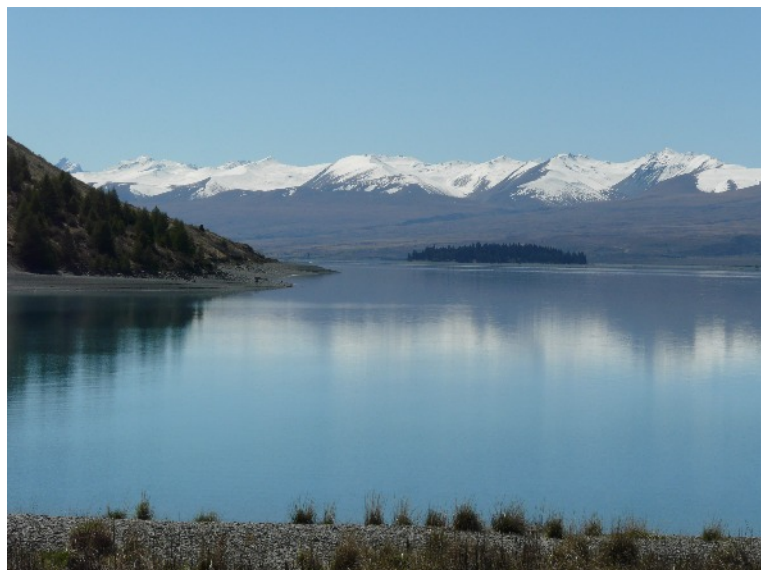
Start them early I say.



For all its problems New Zealand is still a wonderful place to visit as many members have found out.

It certainly has something for everyone.

‘Tramping’ along its walking and hiking trails is a superb way of seeing the country’s outstanding natural beauty. It has thousands of kilometres of tracks, from multi-day treks through national parks in either the high country or along the coast, to day-walks through superb woodlands and narrow river valleys and gorges.



Lake Tekapo

The Southern Alps offer great mountain challenges with glaciers and untold winter sports opportunities and the Fiords of the deep south, not far north of the antarctic circle, offer magnificent brooding solitude.

I don't know anywhere else in the world where a glacier runs into the sea through lush rainforest. Fox glacier falls nearly 9000 feet in eight miles, on its way to the sea.

New Zealand has unique wildlife, every form of scenery, wild flowers in abundance and wonderful emptiness. It is a small country, similar in size to Great Britain but with a population of only about four million people, mostly it seems living in or around Auckland. It is gloriously uncrowded especially South Island and its people are genuinely friendly and welcoming.

There is a lot of Maori history in North island in particular and Queenstown in the south is a haven for thrill seekers.

There are no dangerous animals on New Zealand except perhaps the gone wild pigs released by early sailors. There are however dangers lurking. They can put anywhere in Europe to shame with their patisseries and as they offer little by way of savoury snacks weight watching is a problem even if trying to walk and swim it off. Some of the worlds finest wines, available at come-and-try-it cafes and restaurants attached to the Wineries are also a severe temptation.

Great beaches, sea fishing, swimming off the rocks and superb sunsets, what's not to like about it.

Don't take my word for it. Go and see for yourself.

You will not be disappointed.



Mount Cook



Kaiteriteri beach



Remarkables over Lake Wakatipu

CHIPPINGS



CONSERVATION

One has to wonder sometimes at what conservation is for. How many of us have ever heard of Wadsley Fossil Forest - this SSSI is a lovely set of petrified tree stumps which were open to the public for at least 40 years. Despite this there was no damage to speak of.

Five years ago following its SSSI designation the area was fenced off and the stumps covered with a considerable depth of sand to protect them.

Nobody can now see them so nobody visits and nothing is added to the local economy. This wonderful asset is effectively lost to us.

It is one site which could be at risk from nearby fracking if an extraction licence is granted. Such 'conservation' tempts one to suggest we get the frackers in and get something out of the area.

There have been horror stories coming out of the States but there is little evidence that with proper care and in suitable places, fracking should cause any problems provided surface infrastructure is adequately shielded

ANDY ANDERSON

Following the obituary in our last edition, Dennis Armstrong recalls a Hill Inn meet in January 1955. That January was a cold clear month, and the meet was well attended. The barn had been laddered, and much jolly sport had been had swivelling the infamous beam in one of the bedrooms. Young Turks he remember such as Roger Allen, David Smith, Richard Gowing, Arthur Tallon and others were there, demonstrating their Alpine skill on thin holds by climbing on the wall of the barn

Finally as midnight approached the subject of beds arose and who was going to sleep where. It became clear that we were overbooked, so volunteers were invited to sleep at Gearstones.

Dennis found that he was a volunteer and learnt that Gearstones was a kindred club hut 'up the valley'.

The logistics were unclear. Then the phrase 'Andy's van' was heard; but where was Andy? The van would get them 'up the valley', and then Andy would return solo. (he had a bed organised). Details about the sobriety of Andy, and enquiries about the accommodation of said van seemed unnecessary. MOTs and Health and Safety 'issues' were 30 years away.

About midnight they came out of the warmth of the Hill Inn; hit the freezing temperature outside only to find that the aforesaid van was an Austin 7. Into this van clambered five of them, David Smith, Tim Smith, Albert Chapman, Arthur Tallon and Dennis, with their kit, meagre as it was.

Andy was a tall well built chap overflowing the driving seat and having settled himself, it was apparent that he was looking forward to a trip up the valley to test his van. Soon the van was filled with noise laughter and good cheer.

The trip was accomplished, but not without various skids on the icy roads. Each was greeted with cheers and Andy responding with bursts of laughter. One, Dennis swears, took the van on to two wheels. They reached Gearstones still in one piece, the key was found and Andy shot off, back to his bed, while we sorted ourselves out by torch light.

Next morning, at 06.00 hrs Dennis found he was with a group of guys who were getting back to the Hill Inn for breakfast, via Whernside. As they stumbled out of the hut, Dennis saw the night sky, a sky like black velvet with just one brilliant bright white planet dominating the view.

Unforgettable!

Dennis, not then a member, remembers meeting Harry Stembridge that morning as they came off Whernside. He was introduced to Harry as a possible member. When he heard that they had come over Whernside, en route for their breakfast

and that they were going on to the Three Peaks, Harry had said: "Sign him up at once."

Looking back, Dennis thinks that journey 'up the valley' in Andy's van, was for him the nearest he ever came to a sticky end. It was however worth it for the sensational view next morning.

Next time Dennis saw Andy it was at LHG, in a more serious mood. The expedition team for the Himalayas was being kitted out, with their kit colour coded. Andy's colour was, he seems to think, blue. It did not seem the moment to remind him of icy roads.

After the expedition, their paths did not cross for some time. The next meeting was at the Centenary Dinner in 1992. Dennis did tackle him about the adventure, but he replied; "Did I?".

But then he had not stopped to see the view.

COASTAL ACCESS

The provision of the right to access the length of the English coast is progressing nicely. Natural England has a statutory duty under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 to improve access to the English coast. The duty is in two parts: one relating to securing a long-distance walking route around the whole coast: we call this the England Coast Path; the other relating to a margin of coastal land associated with the route where people will be able to spread out and explore, rest or picnic in appropriate places. The most valuable and unusual situation with this coastal 'path' is that the area would be able to 'roll back' as the cliffs erode or slip, solving longstanding difficulties with maintaining a continuous route on this stretch of coast. They are establishing a 2,700 mile continuous path around the entire English coastline targeted to be finished by 2020. Work is already under way on more than half the path.

Natural England has set up eight delivery teams around the country to work closely with local authorities, land owners and occupiers, communities, interest groups and others to ensure the best and most appropriate alignment for the new coast path.

Back in March 2016 Natural England submitted to the Secretary of State a coastal access report

relating for the 8 mile (13km) stretch of land between Newport Bridge and North Gare, Teeside. The Secretary of State has announced her approval but the formal, order is still awaited. Similarly and not quite as advanced, in July Natural England submitted its report and proposals to the Secretary of State for coastal access for the 61 miles (98km) stretch of the coast between Gretna and Allonby, Cumbria.

Also in July the new right of coastal access was opened on a 42 mile (67km) stretch of the coast between Camber, East Sussex and Ramsgate, Kent and on a 68 mile (110km) stretch of the coast between Filey Brigg and Newport Bridge, North Yorkshire and Teeside.

Earlier in the year some of Somerset's most spectacular coastline opened to the public for the first time - 58 miles of new and improved coast path from Brean Down to Minehead. Walkers can enjoy several new sections of path between Watchet and East Quantoxhead, which opens up spectacular new views over the Bristol Channel. Somerset Wildlife Trust has also provided seven new interpretation boards along the stretch, to reveal more about the stunning wildlife and landscape features that walkers will be able to see and enjoy along the Somerset coast. This new access joins existing coastal footpaths to create a stretch of high-quality, well-signposted coastal National Trail

Much more detail of progress and the parts now open, including maps, can be seen at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eng-land-coast-path-improving-public-access-to-the-coast>

There is some confusion about what can and cannot be done on this open access land around our coast.

In simple terms people can access these areas to walk or run, climb, watch the wild life and generally sightsee. They cannot ride a horse or bicycle, drive a vehicle (unless it is an invalid carriage), bring an animal, other than a dog, camp, play organised games, hang-glide or paraglide, light, cause or risk a fire, leave litter, use a metal detector, remove, damage, or destroy any plant, shrub, tree or root with intent, damage hedges, fences, walls, crops or anything else on the land, leave gates open, that

are not propped or fastened open, disturb livestock, wildlife or habitats with intent or post any notices. Some of these activities may be permitted with the landowners consent, or if allowed by the law on footpaths, bridleways and other public rights of way, or the right to do something exists already.

There is a general rule that visitors using their open access rights must keep dogs on a short lead of no more than 2 metres between 1 March and 31 July each year (except in the coastal margin) and at all times in the vicinity of livestock. In the coastal margin, dogs must be under effective control at all times. In some circumstances landowners may be entitled to exclude people with dogs completely from small lambing fields.

Of the recently opened stretches, one in Yorkshire gives a very real benefit. The Cleveland Way has been diverted slightly and now a new mile long section goes over the headland above Staithes affording a wonderful view of the village not previously available to us.

STRANGE ENCOUNTERS

When caving you are prepared for surprises but in delving through the archives we have turned up a small but interesting sub plot.

In China some years ago Ged Campion entered a huge chasm with several friends; dark, eerie and obviously deep and full of mist and water vapour. A number of birds nesting in the entrance rose squawking as the team started unreeling their ropes. The cavern was to swallow almost a kilometre of rope before it gave up.

They had found the pothole (Fong Yen) the previous year and had returned with intent. When they started down for the second time they were in for a shock. At over 600 feet down they realised they were not alone. Bruce Bensley to his amazement noticed a small creature in a rock recess by a pool. It appeared to be a flying squirrel, locally known as fly cat (fay mow).

It was just sitting there seemingly oblivious, with slightly disjointed back leg but otherwise in good health.

They had not noticed it the previous day so it must have fallen into the cave that night.

As it avoided their attempts to capture it they continued down the shaft only to find another of these creatures.

They determined to try and rescue them and on the ascent they cornered them, anxiously avoiding being bitten by these whirling fur balls spitting and growling and armed with claws.

The whole episode was excitedly recorded by the Nanning Television caver and cameraman with them.

Once caught and bagged they were carried up the 700 metres of rope.

Apparently the Chinese support team were anticipating preparing a squirrel delicacy for supper. Not to be, the cavers released them in the forest.

Their exploits eventually appeared on local TV.

TOO MANY LOVE THE MOUNTAINS

Well not really but there it's a problem which is getting worse year on year.

People flock to honey pots and are causing damage by sheer numbers. Snowdon summit gets close to half a million visitors each year, and unless it is managed somehow they will deface the thing they have come to see. Many are ill equipped and get into difficulties and they must be made aware that it is a high mountain with all that implies.

The Three Peaks challenge does not help for all the charitable good it does. Wasdale Head at times is a nightmare of crowds, noise and eventually litter.

Even lower level national parks have very real problems.

In the Peak District the hottest potato currently is the chewing up of routes by off-roaders. Large four wheel drive vehicles have made many lanes impassable for walkers and cyclists and there are similar problems in the Pennines further north.

Staffordshire County Council has had to take out orders to prohibit motorised traffic on old 'green lanes' where technically they have the right to be. In some places the damage was so bad that even the culprits could not get through and they have knocked down walls and driven field edges to avoid the worse bits spreading the problem and scarring the landscape.

CLUB PROCEEDINGS

Prior to the AGM at the Whoop Hall Hotel an Extraordinary General Meeting was held with around 50 members present. The EGM approved two rule changes.

1) Election of Ordinary Members - Candidates' names and details will be circulated to Members by e-mail at least seven days before any election.

2) Presentation of financial documents - The following documents must be sent by email to all members at least 14 days before the AGM with the proviso that hard copies are made available at the AGM and to any member not on email who formally requests them in advance from the Hon Sec: (i) a copy of the balance sheet and the income and expenditure accounts; (ii) a copy of any report from the Independent Financial Examiners, Reporting Accountants or Auditors

The Annual General Meeting then followed and the retiring president addressed the meeting, proposing the offering of honorary membership to the principal guest at the dinner to follow the AGM, **Andy Eavis**, in recognition of his achievements in the caving world over the years.



John Whalley

He Continued....

"I wish to put on record my gratitude for my Vice President, who has been a rock, not least in ensuring I get to the meetings on time, mostly. Thank you Robert! Also I am grateful to my predecessor Michael Smith for his guidance and continuing work for the club, maintaining links with Norway and all the organization required for the dinner.

I am very grateful for the support of all our officers and Committee. Presidents come and go.

Tomorrow I will be yesterday's man, but it is the Officers who provide the continuity over time, I particularly think of Tim Josephy, Martyn Trasler and Richard Josephy who make long journeys in order to attend the Committee meetings at Lowstern.

Tim Josephy is convalescing after a hip operation, and so could not be with us today. Martyn has kindly agreed to step in for him.

Numbers in the club have kept fairly constant I think, though I do seem to detect a slight shift towards the more youthful end of the spectrum which is encouraging.

The point was raised elsewhere recently that we are about the right size: small enough so that we can get to know each other, developing bonds which can last for life. I've always found YRC both friendly and welcoming. I'm sure this will continue and that the Club will continue to provide a platform for excellence in the years to come; giving support and encouragement to the individual or group activities of our members, within the sphere of our interests.

Roy Denney also could not be present as he is abroad but has certainly raised the bar with the current journal format. Remember that the Journal relies on contributions from us.

We have had a full programme of meets this year, attendances were good and many meets were fully booked.

I have been heartened to see several new faces on recent meets: prospective members who fit in very well and, I'm sure, will carry forward the traditional values of our club. Next years calendar is now finalised and promises to be at least as good. The Committee decided that a new post of Meets Secretary should be created, and Peter Elliot has very ably taken on this role. It has certainly eased the Presidents burden.

I would like to thank Val and Tony Penny, for organizing another Spanish meet next year at El Chorro. They led a very enjoyable one last year with Gypsum caves and mountains to go at.

The Introductory meet was a success and very enjoyable.

On the general subject of attracting groups of youngsters, I think this will happen naturally. Although youngsters can pursue their activities without joining a club nowadays, there is no denying the advantage of facilities such as we enjoy at Lowstern.

I feel it has been a great privilege for me to serve as President for the last year, but I am confident that in handing over to Mick Borroff we will be in safe and capable hands, and maybe see some new initiatives. I can tell you though, he took a fair bit of persuading! Though I knew it would be worth it."

John Whalley

Membership Report

New:	6
Deceased:	2
<i>Alan Brown; Raymond Ince</i>	
Resigned;	1
New Life Members:	3
<i>Robert Crowther; Peter Moss; Howard Rutter</i>	
Total current membership:	162

Roles agreed for 2017

The President	Mick Borroff
Vice President	Chris Hilton
Hon. Treasurer	Martyn Trasler
Hon. Secretary	Tim Josephy
Huts Secretary	Richard Josephy
Warden, Lowstern	Richard Sealey
Warden, Low Hall Garth	Alister Renton

Other committee members:

Harvey Lomas
 Andrew Syme (Webmaster)
 Peter Elliott (Meets Secretary)
 Rachel Evans

Other Club Roles:

Hon. Editor	Roy Denney
Hon. Auditor	Richard Taylor
Hon. Librarian	Arthur Salmon
Hon. Archivist	Alan Linford
Hon. Membership Secretary	Helen Smith
Tacklemaster	Ged Campion



Mick Borroff - Incoming President

"As your new President, I would like to say a few words before I take over the reins from John.

Unlike many of my predecessors, I have only been in the Club for 12 years - a relatively short time, so I am very honoured to take on the role of President of the YRC this year. I would also like to record my thanks to Chris Hilton for agreeing to be my Vice-President. I am sure he will provide me with good support and advice.

Having served on the Committee for 10 years now, I think I have a good grasp of the issues that the Club has wrestled with over this period. Some happily have been put to bed like inclusive membership and the update of our rules, others are perpetual insomniacs, like attracting younger members. We are currently in a relatively stable period relative to membership numbers, hut usage and thus our finances. We have continued to attract new active members and this must continue.

So what areas do I plan to focus on?

1) As others have observed before, a dynamic and interesting Meets calendar is a top priority, driving interest both inside and outside the club. I'd like to thank Peter Elliott for taking on the Meets Secretary's position this year to ensure tighter co-ordination of meet booking and marketing. This year all meets have leaders and all the huts are booked.

2) I will continue to work with the Meets Committee aiming to deliver an interesting programme, both in the UK and overseas, and would welcome any ideas you would like to put forward before our next meeting on December 9th. I hope that earlier and better marketing of meets will encourage more members to attend them. Thanks to Andy Syme, the 2017 meets are all now visible on the website. Michael Smith has taken on the early marketing concept and his long walk meet in July is already open for booking!

3) Our website is increasingly the window through which the world sees the YRC and our activities. Chris and Alister Renton did a great job in setting-up the original website and Andy Syme has continued this in adding more content and functionality. We need to build on this and refresh some of this material. I would like to see a cleaner, a more attractive leading page, a stronger visibility of the meets programme and better marketing of the Club and how to join. I would also like to complete the uploading of all the remaining Journal PDFs.

4) Our huts, especially Lowstern, are major assets and continue to attract visitors. I think we can do a better job of using them to help market the club and I have some new ideas to take this forward, including the placement of more contemporary images of our activities.

I'd like to close by thanking John Whalley our retiring President for his efforts over the past two years and Helen Smith for agreeing to take over the Membership Secretary's role.

I look forward to seeing you on as many Meets as we can both make next year, starting with our walk tomorrow."

The Annual Dinner

After the formalities of the EGM & AGM, chaired efficiently in the absence of the Hon. Secretary (following his hip replacement operation) by the Honorary Treasurer, the organisers spoke about forthcoming overseas meets to Spain and the US.

The five proposers of this year's new members were presented with bottles of wine.

The retiring President, John Whalley, again drew on his and Carol's wide network of caving contacts to secure the eminent caver Andy Eavis as the principal guest who opened the proceedings before members were called to dinner.

Andy had only days earlier returned from cave surveying in the Middle East but gave an entertaining and wide ranging talk on large cave exploration and surveying.

The multiple images gradually revealing the size of some of the world's largest caverns were stunning.

Entitled "*Why climb big mountains when you can go down big beautiful holes in the ground*" his talk and his arguments carried some weight, especially after a rough day on the hills.

The culmination of the presentation was a full and real-colour virtual fly-through of the whole Miaos system in China created from synchronised photography and automated laser-surveying.

See www.nationalgeographic.com/chinacaves/supercaves

The system Andy and his colleagues have developed is being used to measure the volume of the world's largest caverns and reorder their ranking.

The impressive Miao Room cavern was measured at 10.78 million cubic metres, covering the area of 22 football pitches and having 45m tall stalagmites.

Those socialising in the bar area pre-meal could re-live their year's meet activities or see what they had missed by viewing the display of photographs or the video display of scenes from the meets.

Called to table in fine Scots tone by Master of Ceremonies, David Large, 55 members and 38 guests sat down to the meal.

it was agreed by all, it was a fine menu.

🌿 Starter 🌿

Potted Salmon Roulade and a micro salad served with a lemon and dill caper dressing

Soup served with a freshly baked roll

Local Game Terrine, damson chutney & dressed leaves

🌿 Main 🌿

Braised Lamb Shank with garlic mash, red wine jus, wild mushroom & tarragon risotto, crispy rocket and truffle oil

Whole Roast Partridge served with winter vegetables, port and red wine jus, and roasted new potatoes

Fillet of Seabass served with a fennel and dill salad, and a white wine butter sauce

🌿 Dessert 🌿

Apple and Blueberry Crumble with Crème Anglaises

Cheeses with celery, grapes, Dundee cake and Mrs B's chutney

Eton Mess

🌿
Tea or Coffee

Attending:

Andrew Eavis,	Principal Guest
Lilian Eavis	
Dave Allanach,	CPC
Richard Dickinson,	Wayfarers
Simon Fraser,	SMC
Chris Kenyon,	FRCC
Ron Kenyon,	FRCC
Neil Hutton,	Gritstone
John Whalley,	President
Alexa Wightman,	Pianist

Dennis Armstrong	Liz Holmes
Joan Armstrong	Dorothy Heaton
Dave Booker	David Hick
Mick Borroff	Chris Hilton
Hilary Tearle	Alan Hinkes
John Brown	Fiona Humphreys
Ros Brown	Jason Humphreys
George Burfitt	Judy Humphreys
Viv Burfitt	Rebecca Humphrey
Derek Bush	John Jenkin
Aaron Champion	Stephen Jones
Ged Champion	Richard Josephy
Peter Chadwick	Alan Kay
Albert Chapman	Ian Laing
Anne Chapman	Una Laing
Garry Chapman	Cliff Large
Iain Chapman	David Large
Jo Chapman	Alan Linford
Ian Crowther	Angie Linford
Karen Levine	Andy Lofthouse
Robert Crowther	Bill Lofthouse
Ann Dover	Tim Lofthouse
Anne Dover	Harvey Lomas
Paul Dover	John Lovett
Richard Dover	Duncan Mackay
Andrew Duxbury	Christine Marriott
Eddie Edkins	John Middleton
Rachel Evans	Valerie Middleton
Caron Ferguson	Peter Moss
Ian Ferguson	Conrad Murphy
David Gamble	Rory Newman
Marcia Godden	Anthony Penny
Mike Godden	Valerie Penny
Elizabeth Gowing	Harry Robinson
Richard Gowing	Ann Salmon
David Handley	Arthur Salmon



Trevor Salmon
Fiona Smith
Michael Smith
Richard Smith
Tony Smythe
John Sutcliffe
Arthur Tallon
Richard Taylor
Martyn Trasler
Carol Whalley
Frank Wilkinson

ARCHIVES etc.

For newer members who may wish to read of the exploits of past members we are progressively putting the old editions on the web site. There are however spare copies of many of the journals of the last twenty years to be had from the Librarian.

There is also a lot of other material on the very early days in our extensive archives at the Public Records Office at Northallerton under the control of their professional archivists although the material remains the Club's property. There are historical records of all early activities together with hundreds of photographs.

There is much fascinating material to be read there. Some of you may have read of Whymper in the Andes. Fewer will know of Slingsby's crossing the Eastern Karakoram range to discover the forty nine mile long Siachen Glacier in 1909 with another Yorkshire man Tom Longstaffe or his attempts on Kamet in May 1911 and June 1913. Kamet or Ibi Gamin fell to another member, Frank Smythe who made the first successful ascent. Earlier still Geoffrey Hastings climbed on Nanga Parbat with Mummery and Collie in 1895.

Delving into old records can turn up surprising pictures of current members in their much younger days and using what now seems primitive gear.

If you are at all interested in the early days of climbing or caving and the activities of the Club back then, it is well worth a visit.

There is also a comprehensive library to be found at Lowstern.

The following journals have recently been received and will be deposited in the library



The Grampian Speleological Club

5th series vol. 2 no. 1 October 2016

Caving work throughout Scotland and a trip to the Abode of Clouds, N.E. India

Irish Speleology

no 22 Oct 2016

Caving in Ireland today and a review of some historic exploration and cave finds.

The Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa

No. 118 covering 2015

With articles on Nepal, The Eiger, Turkey, The Dolomites, and of course across southern Africa.

The Alpine Club

vol. 120 no. 364 - 2016

Includes climbing in West Nepal, Pakistan, Alaska, Tajikistan, Greenland, Bolivia and Ladakh.

There is a new computer in the library with the Koha library programme which requires a user ID (available, if you do not know it, from the Librarian, Arthur Salmon). This program is designed to meet the requirements of large libraries, so it provides many facilities which are not currently relevant to the YRC Library. Some of these are accessed on the Home page where the computer opens and these should be ignored at present. For example, there are links to the YRC web site, Authority Search and Tag Cloud. However, the Advanced Search can be useful.

Members are requested to use the 'Self Check Out' and 'Check In' to record when books are borrowed and returned. In the 'Self Check Out', if you enter the 'Call Number' of a book you have out on loan, you will be given the option of renewing or returning the book. The 'Call Number' listed in the catalogue refers to the position of the book on the shelving. The prefix letter refers to the shelf (A, B, C, D, E, G, X, Z) and the 3-digit number to the book's position on the shelf. The prefix X refers to books that have lost their number or have not yet been labelled and Z to books in either the bookcase in the Dining Room or the shelves in the Lounge.

THE JOURNAL

Another point of record is of course the journal. It is YOUR journal and if members want it to fulfil its primary purpose they do need to feed material to the Editor.

We are making increasing use of the web site but the written word has more durability. We are working towards having all the old journals available on the web site but will continue producing paper versions for as long as the members feel it serves a purpose.

A number of members have promised articles on interesting things they have done but never get round to putting them together. Many of us would prefer to go out and do more things than write up what has been done but it is important to document our activities, both so that other members can enjoy hearing about them but also to enthuse them to go and do similar.

Many of our no-longer-young members can get little out of the Club other than the journal and they do like to keep up with our activities. I know this from the members who contact me to thank me after most editions.

MEETS

What makes a perfect meet? What do we want by way of meets?

To my mind meets should provide us with opportunities to do things and go to places that it would otherwise be difficult for us to arrange as individuals. In the early days of the Club private arrangements were very difficult but today with the advent of professional training organisations, commercial hostels and low cost airlines it is perhaps less so.

A meet should also extend the ambitions of members.

In looking at the meets programme I am sure the sub committee have these considerations in mind but they are always open to suggestions from members and there are corners of Britain which can provide surprisingly good sport for the occasional weekend if not enough to take us back there regularly. Members in those localities should be encouraged to suggest and organise meets.

Another important tool is the evidence of past meets and this is an area where we have not in the past been too hot. It can tell us what sort of meets are most popular with which members. It is clear that some members only turn out when we visit classic areas but they miss out on some great one-off events in less known spots.

We have a range of regular overseas meets, treks and expeditions but not all can get away for these.

Looking back at reports of meets in the 60s to 80s very popular meets seemed to be those based on larger country inns where older members took all the rooms; we all ate in the hotel but most of the members crashed out in tents outside, on bar room floors, in annexes or barns or on one occasion in the armoury. These were in areas providing all levels of activity for members of different abilities but it seems fire regulations have made these 'hybrid' meets more difficult. They did use to get large turn outs.

Numbers are not everything however. We have never been a 'large' club with long crocodiles of members in fetching anoraks, all following each other over the hills. We all report to meets arranged in excellent venues and then do our own things. It is important however that for the future of the club we still undertake challenging activities to fire the enthusiasm of younger members and potential members.

CLUB PROPERTIES

Can we remind members and members of kindred clubs that our cottages are available for family use and are often empty mid-week when there is no minimum charge. They offer many creature comforts. Given the state of the traffic on a Friday and a Sunday, mid-week is a good time to have a short break.

Both have been much improved and extended over the years thanks to a series of wardens taking responsibility for each property and in no small part to the numerous members who turn out each year for maintenance weekends. There have often been as many as 20 members getting stuck in and it has been no mean feat for the wardens to organise and control their enthusiasms and cater for their appetites.



Lowstern Cottage near Clapham in the Yorkshire Dales, with grand views out over Bowland.

It sleeps 22 in a number of dormitories with six beds reserved for members

Low Hall Garth behind Little Langdale Tarn at the foot of Wetherlam in Cumbria

This property sleeps 15 in a single dormitory with three beds reserved for members



OBITUARIES & APPRECIATIONS

Alan Brown 1924 - 2016

Member 1955

Honorary Life Member

Alan was born and schooled in Hornsea before going to St Peters School in York.

In 1942 aged 18 he left school and volunteered for the Royal Navy, almost immediately finding himself aboard HMS Matchless escorting convoys to Murmansk, Russia.



Later he joined the joint coastal defence forces and became first officer and navigator on a motor torpedo boat covering the Channel Islands and the French coast.

A few days before D-Day as part of a large exercise, Alan's MTBs patrol was attacked by three Beaufighters and the craft leading the flotilla was ablaze and theirs badly damaged. Using a dinghy he rowed over to evacuate some

of her crew until a destroyer arrived to help, leaving him to limp back to port on one engine. Next his MTB sailed to France as part of the massive invasion fleet and two weeks later they were honoured to take Winston Churchill and Lord Ismay from Utah beach to Arramanches to meet Eisenhower.

Following the war in Europe Alan was ordered to the Far East to join a naval group destined to invade Malaya.

At the age of 22 with all that behind him he took a three month business training course at Hull University and took employment as a clerk with a company which gave him the opportunity of joining their Canadian agents in Toronto. He then moved to Vancouver taking a job as a lumber jack before returning to England to rejoin his old firm.

In 1955, thanks to Jack Dossor, an old Hornsea friend, Alan was invited to join the YRC but living so far from Yorkshire, the Lakes and Scotland, it was difficult to attend many meets. He managed three or four each year and made a point of fitting in the, what he found memorable, Whit Meets in Scotland: Skye, Rhum, Torridon, Galloway and the Cairngorm.

In 1997 Alan trekked up the Khumbu with a YRC group led by Ken Aldred and in 1999 used a piece in the journal to extol the magic of Table Mountain in South Africa.

He considered completing the Cuillin Ridge in Skye with Bob Chadwick, Andy Anderson, Arthur Craven and Peter Swindells the zenith of his Club activities.

In 1958 he married Madge and set up home in Middlesex and son Kevin came along to be followed by two daughters.

Alan gradually worked his way up to become Overseas Director of his firm, appointing agents

all over the world and making regular visits to them and finally becoming Vice Chairman of the company.



They retired to Ilkley where we were near neighbours of mine and wandered the local hills and the mountains in Scotland, across Europe and finally aged 73 in Nepal where he reached 18,000 feet.

As they aged they moved down from the edge of the moors and moved to Carleton near Skipton and finally moved again into the centre of Skipton when Alan could no longer drive. He suffered poor health in his last few years.

In 2014, attachés of the Russian Embassy, Elizaveta Vokorina and Vadim Retyunskiy, presented the Ushakov medal to Alan as a veteran of the Arctic Convoys.

He was awarded this military honour by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation for his personal courage and bravery displayed in WWII.

Last year he was presented with the French Legion d'Honneur in his hospital room at Bradford Royal Infirmary as part of the 70th anniversary commemoration of the Normandy landings, and despite being very frail, Alan was reported to have worn his jacket and other

medals as Jeremy Burton, the French Honorary Consul for Leeds, presented him with the award.



Alan receiving his Russian medal.

Just days after the presentation of his French honour, and having celebrated his 92nd birthday, Alan died.

Roy Denney

JOHN DISLEY CBE 1928 - 2016

Olympian, orienteer, fell runner, mountaineer, climber, Welsh Sports Personality of the Year, sports administrator, author... what more is there to say?

John Ivor Disley died last year. During a career in athletics, he competed in several disciplines but mainly in the 3000 metres steeplechase, winning the bronze medal for the event at the Helsinki Olympics in 1952.

He set 5 British records in this event and four at two miles. He represented Wales in the Commonwealth Games, in 1954 and 1958.

Born in Gwynedd he attended Oswestry Boys High School and Loughborough College before becoming a P E teacher in a London school.

He was later to become chief instructor at the national mountain climbing centre at Plas Y Brenin in north Wales

He excelled at many sports and along the way, became active in sports promotion and administration. He was Vice-Chairman of the UK Sports Council 1974 until 1982.

He was probably the leading pioneer of orienteering in Britain and was an excellent fell runner, once breaking the record for the traverse of the Welsh 3000 foot peaks.

At an event in Sweden in 1955 John had happened on an orienteering race but failed miserably, not surprising as there is a lot more to it than novices realise. He was however sold on the concept and tried to set up competitions but found few prepared to buy a map for each race.

Only when photocopying arrived did the sport start to take off.

He described it as a sport for “thinking” runners and with his connections, he attracted athletes of top calibre such as Chris Brasher, Roger Bannister, Bruce Tulloh and Martin Hyman.

In 1967 the British Orienteering Federation was formed, with Disley as its secretary, and Gordon Pirie became its first men’s champion. Orienteering was, in many ways, his first taste of real innovation, later to be followed by the London Marathon.

In the dim and distant past I recall an event or some other gathering of orienteers when John and Chris Bonington appeared and it brought home to me just what a magnificent sport orienteering could be.

John was to partner Chris Brasher in many ventures, both being keen on orienteering, running, hiking and mountain-climbing. Perhaps less well known in some circles, he was also a better than competent climber.

In his earlier days he would often be found at Zermatt enjoying topping the Breithorn and

Matterhorn. He also did great work from Chamonix and some classics in the Tatras.

When he reached retirement age for most people, and started drawing his state pension, he climbed Mt. Kenya.



They don’t make em like that any more.

Thank you John.

Roy Denney

DENNIS GREENALD 1925 - 2016

Born in Bradford to a family of modest means he spent his formative years wandering the moors nearby. He went on to climb fairly extensively in both Britain and the Alps.

In the 50s he and his companions went to climb in the Himalayas, to Baltistan and the Karakoram and conquered at least one previously unclimbed peak.

Dennis and his wife spent a lifetime climbing and were members of the Alpine Club.

JIGME DORJE PALBAR BISTA

King of Mustang

1930 - 2016

King Jigme Dorje Palbar died last December aged 86. He was born in Lo-Manthang Palace in Upper Mustang and became king in 1964 and remained so until in 2008 when such titles were abolished.

Bista is a title bestowed by the King of Nepal and means the equivalent of distinguished baron.

Nepal had a number of sub-kingdoms like Mustang (Salyan, Bajhang and Jajarkot)

The Nepali monarchy was founded in 1768 and was abolished on 28 May 2008 by the Nepalese Constituent Assembly along with the sub-kingdoms.



Albert Chapman has penned this appreciation.

“King Jigme Palbar Bista was the last king of the remote kingdom of Mustang in Nepal’s Himalayas. He was born in Lo-Manthang, once the capital of the former Tibetan kingdom of Lo.

He was the youngest son of King Angun Tenzing Trandul. After his private studies in south western Tibet in 1950 he married H.H. Rani Sahiba Sidol Palbar Bista a Tibetan royal.

As the spiritual leader, he used much of his power to strictly preserve Tibetan Buddhist culture and in 2008, when Nepal’s Deputy Prime minister was sent to Mustang to ask him to step down, he accepted the government’s request saying he

would live as a civilian and continue to work towards preserving Tibetan culture and Buddhism in Mustang. Bista traced his lineage back to Ame Pal, the warrior who founded the kingdom in 1380.

During his rule he supported the resistance against Beijing’s occupation of western Tibet and in the 1960s allowed Tibetan Khampa warriors, trained by the CIA, to use Mustang as a base for Attacks on Chinese troops in Tibet.

Mustang was opened up to tourists in 1992 and Tim Smith and I planned a visit in 1993 hopes of meeting the king in Lo-Manthang. I had written to him a month before suggesting we cross one of my highland cows with one of his yaks (resulting in a dzo (male) or dzum / zhom, female hybrid).

We flew into Jomsom and trekked for seven days to reach Lo-Manthang. The king had sent a guide to the village of Tsarang to escort us the last five hours to his palace, where we met him and his Tibetan wife. Crossing our cattle proved impractical but Tim talked with him about the Tibetan Apso dogs that Tim bred.

It was a delightful visit and well worth the journey. Mustang is the most beautiful, remote and rarely visited regions of Nepal”

It is of course much more regularly visited now.



UK MEETS REPORT

ANGLESEY LONG WALK

July 8 - 10 2016

The Walk

The Long Walk this year was to take in the northern section of the Isle of Anglesey coastal path. The path is relatively new, being formally opened in June 2006.



Gearing up at the start

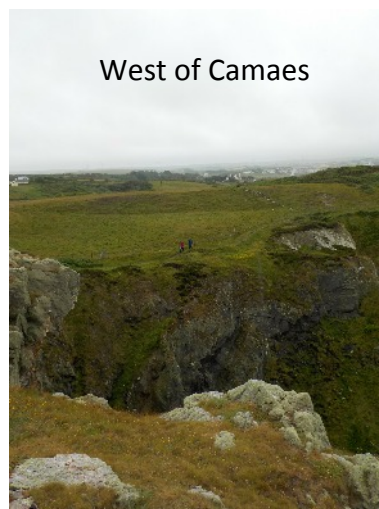
A large contingent of Smiths plus a Borroff and a Sutcliffe set off at 6:00am to walk clockwise from Church Bay. The second party comprising the Whalleys, Paul Dover, Ken Roberts and John Brown followed an hour later. It was only drizzling at this stage and there was the slight perk of the brisk south westerly wind which, for much of the day would at least partly blow us along. It was not to be long, however, before the weather became unseasonably awful with strong wind and heavy rain.

It may have been the low visibility combined with tired eyes but the first point of note was passing the White Ladies. The navigation beacons at Carmel head were originally constructed to help keeps boats stay clear of the dangerous submerged Coal Rock, although we discovered that they are useful for sheltering us from driving rain.

As we rounded the next headland the distinctive Cemlyn Bay came into view. A shingle bar cuts across the bay forming a brackish lagoon behind. As we crossed the bar the raucous noise from nesting birds on the lagoon's only island was loud enough to make conversation difficult. The relative serenity of the far side of the bay was

soon reached, bringing Wylfa Nuclear Power Station into view. Although now undergoing decommissioning, surprisingly the coastal path passes close enough to the power station to hear the hum from the transformers.

Just past Wylfa Head we descended into Cemaes Bay village, the first sizeable inhabitation so far on the route. Here we saw the first people not in our party that day - probably a combination of the early start and the poor weather rather than the remoteness of Anglesey.



West of Cemaes

The section of the coastal path was marked by various ruined buildings from old industry.

First was the Llanlliana old porcelain works hidden in a small secluded valley.



A hot kiln would have been welcomed however we still made use of the ruin to shelter from the rain. Dolphins were spotted below us in the churning water from the adjacent headland. They were presumably feeding or having fun in the strong currents that brush against Anglesey's coastline.

Second were the remnants of old mine workings and buildings in the next bay. Still imposing above the sea even in their deteriorated state.

With stomachs starting to rumble it was good timing as we walked into Amlwch Port for our food stop.

Hot dogs and hot tea were welcomed and guzzled down next to Amlwch's impressively narrow harbour (barely enough room to turn the fishing and leisure boats around). Some entertainment was provided by the second group missing the stream crossing and wandering back and forth on the wrong side of the harbour.

Navigation was on the whole very simple. Keeping the sea to the left and we couldn't go too wrong. There are a few places where the coastal path diverted inland for short sections around estates or farms but it soon returned to the shore. Throughout the whole walk it was very well signposted with the coastal path emblem. Although one should always carry a map it is possible to get by without one.

Although still feeling refreshed from the lunch stop the inlet of Traeth Dulas was a particularly demoralising, if pretty, section of the coastal path.

Here the sea runs inland for over a mile meaning that after an hour's solid walking you practically end up back where you started. It was tempting to stop at the Pilot Boat Inn. However after the inlet we were rewarded with a brief improvement in the weather and seals playing in the waters of Traeth yr Ora's sandy bay.

Given the landscape was always coastal it still managed to be quite varied and interesting. There were magnificent sandy beaches, winding cliff top paths, dark canopied tracks and heathered tops. Each section of the walk very much had its own character which was sometimes further varied by the changing weather.

Coming up to the last quarter of the walk we were starting to tire. Passing the beach cafe at Lligwy we supplied ourselves with more tea (to go). This powered us on through a passing heavy rain shower to Moelfre.

The tide was now well out and in the following



Lligwy Bay

bay at Traeth Bychan we took the opportunity to walk along the beach. Although flatter and more scenic than the official route along the road this did result in some adventurous scrambling up the cliffs at the far end of the bay. Further scrambling was then required over a short section where the coastal path had recently slipped away. On the whole though, the coastal path was in very good condition and well cared for.

Not put off from our previous experience of walking on the beach, we again descended onto the sands at Benllech for the last stretch into Red Wharf Bay. Although the end was in sight the last few kilometres were very tiring due to a strong headwind. Sticking in the lee of the shoreline, we finally finished at The Ship Inn with darkness descending.

The full Anglesey coastal path is 200km with a record standing for fastest completion in 4 days. On reflection, our section of 61 km in 13:30 hours doesn't seem too bad.

Sunday was varied with people splitting off separately to recover, travel, walk or cave. Tim, Michael and I headed underground into the mines of Parys Mountain. Carol, Alan, John J and John W went to South Stack and then did a circuit of Holyhead Mountain, meeting up with Paul, Ken and John B on the way. Other activities that weekend included a scramble up the magnificent Llech Ddu Spur and a bespoke guided tour of the Great Orme Ancient Copper Mines.

Well done to Mick, John Sutcliffe and Fiona who also completed the full walk.

Many thanks to all those that helped out with the feeding and ferrying of people around the island (Tim, Alan and John) and especially Tim for putting on a great meet.

The excellent accommodation for the meet was at the Anglesey Outdoor Centre in Trearddur Bay.

Richard Smith

The Underground Report

After decades of our meet leader's tales of corrosion, contamination and collapse in Parys Mountain's mines, we had a chance to experience these ourselves on the Sunday.

Tim took Richard and Michael on a three-hour tour of some of the mines' highlights. First came the warnings not to take underground anything you value as the rust, clay or acidity would ruin them. Tim organised boiler suits, lamps and cows' tails for us to save our own shiny gear. Next there was the advice not to wear a furry undersuit, just thin old clothing. Then we were off to Amlwch, yesterday's lunch spot, and a drive up the nearby Mountain finishing off-road through a locked gate. The Parys Underground Group's squat hut is over one of the entrances amidst a chaotic landscape of colourful spoil. It sheltered us from the wind as we changed. A short walk to the padlocked entrance shaft to Mona mine and we were in.

formations and flaky formations of pure rust. Memorable too were the tiptoeing up and down hundred-year-old wooden ladders, the wades through rust-scummed water, the cloying kaolin-like clay, tingling splashing through acid (pH3.5, equivalent to cider vinegar), the 150m canal requiring shoulder-depth immersion and the snottites. These last hang as quivering straws or wafting revolting curtains in the recently drained passages. They are mucous webs of bacteria living on sulphurous compounds and dripping sulphuric acid the strength of battery acid. What with these and the weird rock landscape above one could be on some alien planet.



How Tim remembers the routes through the interconnecting maze of passages, junctions, ladders, clay slopes, canals and shafts I have no idea but he got us through. Some of the highlights were the various pieces of wooden machinery (wood to avoid metal corrosion), seemingly haphazard propping of tons of overhead rocks by now rotting baulks of timber, aquamarine and crimson pools, dark brown

Tim's tour took us from the Mona mine to the Parys mine through a small connection which only became feasible again after the lowering of the water level by 40m in 2003 after concerns over the safety of a dam. It was fascinating to see different phases of the mine from the Bronze age, through eighteenth and nineteenth century world dominance and providing cladding for Britannia's fleet, through to the last workings a century ago. We emerged clambering up 70m in stages to increasing fresh air and an exit inside the changing hut.

There are plans to open works further west on the Mountain. Let's hope they don't impinge on the passages which gave us this grand tour. Thanks to Tim and the Parys Underground Group's gear. We were left with memorable smells and images, stinging eyes and a final warning to thoroughly wash our own gear quickly before it rotted away.

Michael Smith

Attendees:

John Whalley, President

Mick Borroff,	Helen Smith
John Brown	Fiona Smith
Alan Clare	Richard Smith
Paul Dover	John Sutcliffe
John Jenkin	Ken Roberts
Tim Josephy	Carol Whalley

INTRODUCTORY MEET, LOWSTERN August 26 - 28

In addition to our members in attendance we had prospective members Pat Dempsey and Rebecca Humphreys and my son Matthew who has attended a number of these meets over the years as has Ros Brown, John's wife.

Friday saw arrivals at various times throughout the evening with one eager attendee travelling from Southampton so no prizes for guessing who was last to arrive!

Saturday brought us some fine weather and the main body of the meet decided to meet the dequert of the PM's and guests to take part in some climbing activities so plans were set to go

off to Hutton Roof once all had been kitted out with the right equipment and conducted a few safety checks and routines. I and Matthew, Michael, Rebecca, Pat, Alan, Paul and John set off in two cars and parked in the "village" outside Lowther Court. Walking up to and following Crag Lane to take the track up to the crags themselves. The conditions were great, apart from a bit of moisture on the ground from the previous nights downpour the rocks were dry and benefiting from sunshine. Initial climbs were based around Sycamore Buttress with a first climb on Groove line a moderate climb. This gave all of the newcomers some degree of confidence as they all managed to get to grips with this. They moved on to Hebe classed as "VD" and the challenge of Daphne "S" with an interesting overhang to start.

After lunch some instruction and practical exercises were undertaken with leading a climb and protection to add to our newcomers knowledge and the party moved down to "Sunny Wall" and the four climbs there ranging from "D" to "VD" which was aptly named at that point in the afternoon. Thanks to Alan, Michael, John and Paul for their guidance and patience to those inexperienced climbers and they were rewarded for their efforts with a pint in the Reading Room at Clapham.

Our President and Carol found their plans for the day scuppered and so ended up helping Eddie Edkins with an attempt at removing a sizable tree root from the ground. I am not sure if they are all still at it although they were seen in the Reading Room along with Mike Godden.

In the evening we assembled for dinner in the usual manner and were joined by Albert and Ged.

Sunday brought a mixed bag of activity. Matthew and I took a walk from Horton over Pen-y-Ghent to get a few miles under his belt in anticipation of his next D of E expedition in a few weeks. Rebecca decided to set off over Whernside in the company of Albert's dog to give it some exercise. That was going well until the dog set off after a rabbit and was not seen again until Rebecca returned to Albert's to find the dog quite content after ditching her.

Michael walked from Barden Moor to Bolton Abbey then the Strid and back round by the Barden reservoirs on the way home.

Paul, John and Ros parked at Buckden and climbed Buckden Pike via the Roman Road followed by a peaty path along the ridge before descending to Starbottom. They crossed a fast flowing Wharfe and followed the riverside path back to Buckden.

The cloud level was variable but when it lifted the visibility was excellent. They then travelled to the A1M via Grassington and Knaresborough. From the high ground above Pateley Bridge we could see the Cleveland Hills including the Kilburn White Horse right down to the Wold escarpment.

This was a most enjoyable and sociable meet with activities that were enjoyed by all and my thanks to those who gave me much needed assistance in the kitchen to enable us to eat on Saturday evening."

Martyn Trasler

Attendies

John Whalley, President

Alan Linford	Michael Smith
Carol Whalley	Mike Godden
Ged Campion	Pat Dempsey
John Brown	Paul Dover
Martyn Trasler	Rebecca Humphreys
Matthew Trasler	Ros Brown

GREAT LANGDALE, RLH JOINT MEET WITH THE WAYFARERS Sept 16 - 18

The annual joint meet with the Wayfarers took place at their Robertson Lamb Hut (RLH) in Langdale and as usual they provided excellent hospitality and accommodation. George Chambers did the honours with the evening meal on the Friday and breakfast on Saturday. David Carpenter followed this with the Saturday evening meal and Sunday breakfast. All meals proved to be excellent and were most welcomed. Thanks also must go to the many others who provided help with preparation, serving and clearing up.

Despite some prolonged heavy rain late Friday afternoon and overnight the remainder of the weekend turned out to be perfect for walking with a mixture of warm and drying weather. Those wishing to climb though decided to wait until the Sunday to make sure of the conditions.

A number of the YRC attendees were able to get to Langdale early enough for a walk on the Friday. In increasing rain Jim, Christine and Michael explored Loughrigg including its 'caves' (quarries) whilst Martyn, who stayed at Low Hall Garth (LHG) overnight on the Thursday, was able to set off from Rossett Bridge. In a brief break in the rain he followed Mickelden to the junction of Rossett Gill and Stake Gill opting to take the path following the latter up and over the top towards the Borrowdale fells. From the high point of the pass he then took what appeared to be a path towards High Raise which he ended up summiting but not by any discernible track, that initial sighting was the last he saw. From there a track across the soggy top to Sergeant Man and onward towards Blea Rigg breaking off towards Stickle tarn 2/3rds of the way across. From there it was a track down to the back of the New Dungeon Ghyll (NDG) before regaining the track to the Old Dungeon Ghyll (ODG) and a meet up with some of our Wayfarer hosts!

Saturday, which turned out to be the best day for weather, saw many out on the fells, Michael and Richard decided to scramble up Crinkle Gill, which following the heavy overnight rain was sodden and rather splashy! They continued the scramble up the crag above the Gill before heading over Bowfell and then going over to Esk Pike.

Paul and Bill (the Cambridge two) decided to walk up to Bowfell from the ODG NT car park. The main car park was full but there was plenty of space in the overflow field, however, by their return later in the afternoon the overflow section was also very full.

Paul and Bill took the Mickelden route to Bowfell up Rossett Gill, with a small diversion to Rossett Pike, then onto Esk Hause, back over to Bowfell via Esk Pike finally returning down the Band. On their way from Esk Pike they met David Carpenter and Peter Ferguson from the Wayfarers who had come up Hell Gill and over Bowfell as well as Michael and Richard.

Martyn temporarily joined Paul and Bill on his way to Great End via Rossett Gill returning with a diversion up Allen Craggs and the long route over to Stake Pass before coming back down the Stake Gill path to Mickleden Beck and onto Langdale.

Coming in the opposite direction down the Rossett Gill path a group of three from Essex were met who had camped overnight at Angle Tarn in what they described as atrocious conditions and, a little later. Two others who had their tent ripped apart overnight looking for local accommodation that night!

Jim and Christine took the route up from the NDG NT Car Park up to Stickle Tarn. Beyond this point they attempted to follow the path (readily discernible on the map but little trace in reality) up Bright Beck. Eventually they hacked up the hill from the beck and paused at the cairn near Thunacor Knott. From this they took the most direct path to the top of their namesake Harrison Stickle. Their steady way down lay between Loft Crag and Thorn Crag and then Mark gate before returning to RLH via the road.

Dorothy having suffered a back injury shortly before the joint weekend chose a low level walk from the RLH to Tilberthwaite via Chapel Stile, Elterwater, Little Langdale and Hodge Close, returning via Blea Tarn and ODG, about 13 miles, a lovely walk on a good day with a little detour to call in at LHG.

On the return Richard and one of the Wayfarer's braved the cool RLH pool for a dip! A quite wonderful feature at the east side of the club created with a manually operated sluice across an unnamed gill running off Raw Head but which must be rather cold most of the time!

Sunday turned out to be cloudier than Saturday and after an early brief period of very light rain remained dry giving those wishing to climb a good day on the south facing Langdale Crag.

Richard and Michael climbed on a breezy Upper Scout Crag # 1 route with Steve Crossley in a joint venture for the Joint Meet (a rarity) then # 2 and the Glaciated Rib after the Wayfarers left.

On the last a guide with a string of clients on short ropes stopped on a nearby ridge and used Richard (leading) as an object lesson in different types of rope work. The route is renowned for its lack of protection in the lower reaches, but Richard put on a good performance under scrutiny placing protection as far as the crag allowed.

Jim and Christine took the opportunity to explore the western end of Lingmoor Fell. They met up with the Smiths back at RLH for a cuppa and teacake before heading home.

Paul and Bill at first opted to go from the NDG NT car park up to Blea Rigg via the Whitegill Gill to the east of Scout Crag (where they met a number of the Wayfarers embarking on climbs up Scout Crag). The Gill route looked very uninviting being heavily covered in bracken with no distinct path to be seen. As a result they decided to make a return before turning back up a small track to join the normal route to Stickle Tarn alongside Stickle Ghyll. A short way along they left this very populated route to take the public footpath heading under Tarn Crag. This proved to be much quieter and enjoyable with pleasant views back to the Ghyll. After passing Stickle Tarn they took in the tops of Sergeant Man, High Raise*, Thunacor Knott, Harrison Stickle, Pike of Stickle (using a short but pleasant scramble on the North Side) before returning over Loft Crag and down the footpath by Mark Gate above Raven Crag. It had been a delight to climb the Langdale Pikes in brilliant visibility.

*At the shelter on the top of High Raise, Paul and Bill once again met the Essex three. They had camped Saturday night at Stickle Tarn but said they had spent yet another night with high winds and rain! An extremely good reason to join a club to enjoy much more comfort in a hut, so Paul didn't miss that opportunity to say they should give it some serious thought!



Richard Smith on Scout Crag



Paul Dover on Bowfell

Ian Crowther and John Jenkin unfortunately missed the meet as they had not picked up on the date change made after initial publication. They did though spend the next weekend at LHG.

Attendees (YRC):

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Paul Dover | Michael Smith |
| Bill Gibbs | Richard Smith |
| Christine Harrison (G) | Martyn Trasler |
| Jim Harrison (G) | Mike Godden
<i>(Also a member of the Wayfarers)</i> |
| Dorothy Heaton | |

Wayfarers :

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| David Carpenter | Jack Middleton |
| Ian Crosset | Colin Smith |
| David Lawrence | Peter Ferguson |
| George Chambers | Peter Dixon |
| Mike Allen | Steve Crossley |
| Barrie Cheetham | Keith Osborn |



NORTH PENNINES

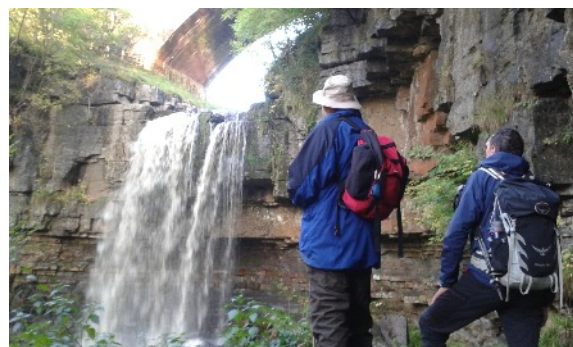
October 14 - 16

The YRC does not often visit the North Pennines on its meets calendar, but the combination of hillwalking and mine exploration proved attractive on this well-attended meet based at the Assay Office Bunkhouse in the world renowned Nenthead Mines complex.

On Friday, on the way to Nenthead, Michael Smith, Christine and Jim Harrison stopped off at Bowlees for a walk round Teesdale's Low Force, High Force and Summerhill Force (all in flood) and Gibson's Cave.

Against an improving weather forecast on Saturday, Mick Borroff, Ian Hawkes and Martyn Trasler undertook a long circular walk (18 miles) from the mine along the River Nent (observing a barn owl in broad daylight) to the cobbled town of Alston (great pie shop!). They then followed the River South Tyne upstream along the Pennine Way to Garrigill, where a quick pint was

enjoyed in the B&B next to the closed pub. The tributary of Ash Gill (flock of juvenile starlings seen) was then followed past several cascades to its impressive waterfall; although no-one could be tempted to go behind it to view the curtain of water from the inside, they all did a spot of caving up through a rift on the right hand side, rather than following the path to view the fall from the road bridge above.



In fact Martyn cracked his ribs crawling through the rift with consequent bruising. A damp return was made along a faint path to the lonely ruined cottage of Seldom Seen in Priorsdale and back down through the interesting mix of

entrance portals, buildings and artefacts of the Nenthead mines.

Meanwhile the underground party comprising Richard Gowing, Christine and Jim Harrison, Harvey Lomas, Michael Smith, John Sutcliffe and Carol and John Whalley was conducted around Smallcleugh Mine by Alan Richardson, without getting their feet wet due to the dry conditions. The party were underground for 3 ½ hours with Alan only losing his way once. Various members were chipping in their two-pennyworths of (in one case considerable) expertise as the need arose. The workings, remains, barrel vaulting, veins and crystals were all impressive. There was plenty of opportunity to explore a little and appreciate the industry and ingenuity of the miners.

An enjoyable meal on the Saturday evening was had in the Miners Arms, conveniently just a short walk away from the bunkhouse.

On Sunday it was damp with low cloud, so Mick Borroff, Ian Hawkes and John Sutcliffe headed north to park in Slaggyford village. A track was followed west across Knarsdale Common, rising damply across the moss to the Cumbria-Northumberland border and Tom Smith's Stone, a rectangular column inscribed with the letters A, C, K and W one on each face. These stand for Alston, Croglin, Knarsdale and Whitley, presumably denoting the Victorian Estate ownerships.



According to the hill bagging website, Tom Smith's Stone is a Nuttall (at 637m) and is the 3148th highest peak in the British Isles and the 278th highest in England!

The weather improved as the party descended Whitley Common to reached the Pennine Way bridge over Gilderdale Burn in sunshine.



South of Whitley Common

They turned north to visit the extremely well preserved earthworks of the Roman fort of Epaicum (Whitley Castle) but John failed to find anything of note in the molehills. The old railway line was then followed back to the car.

Meanwhile, Richard Gowing visited the Kilhope lead mining museum. The museum was set out with a big working wheel driving the ore processing plant and included a very well guided mine tour and impressive underground wheel. Richard strongly recommends other Club members to visit the museum.

The thought of putting on damp caving suits did not appeal much to Harvey (our meet leader), Carol or John Whalley, so they went in search of castles; namely Brough and Lammerside.

To round off Sunday's endeavours, Michael Smith, Christine and Jim Harrison tramped their way up The Dodd, a Hewitt just north of Nenthead. It had a small cairn. In increasing rain they headed back to the bunkhouse for lunch. Then in sunshine and showers they visited Ash Gill waterfall – again through the cleft and explored downstream before an uneventful drive home. Michael adds that the round took in a couple of sections of Isaac's Tea Trail (one part very boggy). This trail has been described as England's last great undiscovered wilderness trek (The Independent on Sunday). A little downstream of Garrigill the group saw three black grouse.

As a footnote, beyond the Miners Arms, beside the track out of Nenthead, the last house has a garden full of miniature stone built buildings, probably replicas of Nenthead buildings.

Thanks to Harvey for organising a very interesting and varied meet.

Attendees

John Whalley, President

Mick Borroff Michael Smith

Richard Gowing Martyn Trasler

Christine Harrison (G) Alan Richardson (G)

Jim Harrison John Sutcliffe

Ian Hawkes Carol Whalley

Harvey Lomas

point of the Barbondale road. From there they descended north to Ellers then upstream by the Dee then Deepdale Beck to Scow. To reach the green lane to return to their car they used the Nun House Outrake with excellent views of the Howgills.



Trow Gill with Neil Hutton the Grits President carrying skis

DINNER MEET, KIRBY LONSDALE November 18 - 20

Friday night saw a steady increase in numbers at Lowstern ready for a day out on Saturday. Some tackled the Ingleborough round while the organiser and SMC guest drove up the icy Leck Fell road and did the round of Crag Hill, the Marilyn Great Coum and the Lancashire high spot, Green Hill. Slow going in deep snow meant the organiser only arrived at the venue minutes before the EGM started.

Lowstern was almost full on Saturday night and all but one of the rooms in the hotel were occupied by our party.

Details of the formalities are given in Club Proceedings

Heavy rains overnight consolidated the new snow on the fells. The original Sunday walk plan involved parking high above Dent but concern that snow there might make parking impossible resulted in a switch to tackling Ingleborough from Clapham. Several members topped Ingleborough in cold windy conditions to be rewarded with fine views towards the Lake District. They returned making tracks through deep snow to Newby and across the fields to Lowstern. One of the three guests with them peeled off from Gaping Gill on skis to make the ascent but later declared it hard going. Others made rounds which included Gaping Gill. Two stalwart members modified the Dent walk and had little difficulty paring at the high



Ascending Ingleborough, on the summit (Wayfarer Richard Dickinson, Mick Borroff, Richard Smith, Michael Smith and John Sutcliffe) and heading for Little Ingleborough



SMC's
Simon
Fraser on
Crag Hill
with a grid
of ice from
the fence

To round off the weekend, returning groups called in at Lowstern for Albert, Arthur and Rachel's ham and eggs before making their ways home.

CHRISTMAS MEET, LOWSTERN

December 9 - 11

The Clubs' Lowstern Hut proved an ideal venue once again for our annual Christmas meet. Lowstern is large and well equipped and has a good drying room and modern kitchen.

On the Friday afternoon, Helen and Michael followed half of the After Dinner meet route which was abandoned because of perceived risk of snow/ice on the Barbondale Road. From the road's col the descent to the north took them past a barnful of turkeys awaiting slaughter for the Christmas festivities! The River Dee was followed upstream to Dent. In increasingly wet and windy conditions Helen and Michael turned up Flinter Gill past the Dancing Flags to take the Green Road to complete the circuit - sodden.

As we all congregated at the Hut on the Friday evening (three hardy members camping outside the Hut), plans were discussed for the following day. The weather forecast (surprisingly warm for the time of year) was for a 20% chance of rainfall and the next day began with an atmospheric sunrise. However mist began to set in on the higher ground - undaunted we split into various parties (after full English breakfast) and headed off:

Helen and Michael were joined by Chris and Jim. Unfortunately Helen's foot injury curtailed their plans to cross Pen-y-Ghent and Plover Hill, so a descent was made to gaze into the depths of

Hunt and Hull Pots before returning to Horton-In-Ribblesdale.

Iain, Alan L, Bill, Paul and David walked from Lowstern, to climb Ingleborough: the route was up through the estate, paying 65 pence each, and looking at Gaping Gill on the way. From the Gill onwards they were in cloud, and finding the summit cairn could have been tricky, had it not been for voices and barking dogs in the 30 yard visibility. The group descended towards Horton and took a right turn at the crossed paths before Sulber Nick. Heading for Norber, and taking a gate in the wall on the left, before descending into Crummack Dale. Iain thinks they must have picked up a lane, ascended to Nappa Scars, before skirting below some erratics, and then to Thwaite Lane, the tunnels, and Clapham. Bill reckoned that his electronics made this a 14.5 mile route. Iain was very impressed by the quality of the path building on the hill, compared with 30 years ago when the tracks were largely unmade rough ground.

Richard, Carol and John W also set off with a view to climbing Ingleborough amidst young families who were making their way up the Estate to see Santa's Grotto at the show cave. By the time Gaping Ghyll was located, Carol and co "couldn't even see the Borough for the clag", and so they decided to traverse across to Clapham Bottoms, and make their way down Long Lane back to Lowstern via the Reading Room, where quite a few YRC members were already congregating.

Mick and Ian H parked in Cowan Bridge and took the riverside path beside Leck Beck north to the hamlet of Leck and continued upstream to the defile of Easegill Kirk. Following the beck upstream they passed a couple of cavers bound for Link Pot and stopped for a chat with some more at the Wretched Rabbit entrance. Continuing up the beck into the mist below Great Coum and at the confluence with Long Swarth Gill (abandoning plans for Great Coum itself) they traversed across to the shooting hut beside the track leading to Leck Fell and back to the car.

They paused to photograph a dead Fieldfare which was found beside the path, perhaps exhausted from its migration from Northern Europe



All those who stayed below 500m were rewarded with occasional views and dry conditions.

We all retired to Lowstern for mince pies followed by Mick's excellent presentation and photographs from the September 2016 Dolpo Trek. We were then treated to a fabulous Christmas evening meal, courtesy of Rob and Andy. Albert, his dog and Dorothy joined the meet for the evening.

Sunday's weather was similar looking to Saturday, though the mist was a little lower.

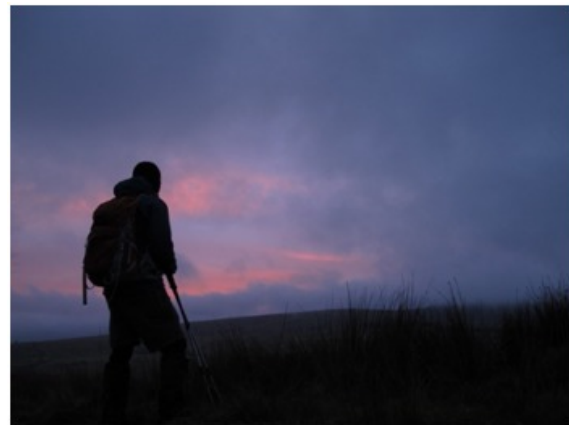
Harvey suggested one of his local walks which Helen, Michael, Chris, Jim, Paul and Bill took. Parking easily in Settle they followed the Ribble Way beside the river's west bank until meeting the A65. In the absence of the map's footbridge (still shown even on OS digital mapping) the road bridge was used to cross the swollen river and walled tracks taken east until the Kirby Malham road was reached. An awkward gate here split the party. Harvey's followers took a steep path up to the viewpoint of High Hill. Helen and Paul arrived there seconds earlier having looped round from the right. Helen's progress was aided by Paul outdoing Sir Walter Raleigh by throwing himself across a springy sprawling wire fence to allow it to be stepped over more easily - greater love hath no man than he lay down... Etc.



After each eating another Crowther mince pie, Bill and Paul headed towards Victoria Cave, while the others returned to Settle via Castleberg Scar. Michael thinks this is good and varied round and recommends it for a short day - "thanks Harvey"

Viewing the low cloud-base north of Clapham, Mick and Ian H decided to head in the opposite direction to Stocks Reservoir in Bowland.

A stoat in its white winter coat was feeding on a road-kill rabbit as they drove over Lythe Fell. A varied round was undertaken from the car park on School Lane via Bottoms, Dob Dale Beck, Whelp Stone crag, the Resting Stone, Rock Cat Knott, Knotteranum, Bowland Knotts, Pike Side and New House.



Derek Clayton attended the meet, after an absence of some years due to reduced walking range.

Pins of beer had been obtained from the Three Brothers Brewery and about 44 pints were consumed. Richard Smith had organised the supply and Alan L collected them and set up the pumps, etc.

Ian Hawkes

Attending

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Mick Boroff, President | Bill Gibbs |
| Alan Clare | Carol Whalley |
| Alan Linford | Chris Harrison (G) |
| Albert Chapman | David Hick |
| Andy Syme | Derek Clayton |
| Arthur Salmon | Dorothy Heaton |

Frank Wilkinson	John Jenkin
Helen Smith	John Whalley
Iain Gilmour	Michael Smith
Ian Crowther	Paul Dover
Ian Hawkes	Richard Gowing
Jim Harrison	Robert Crowther

LITTLE LANGDALE, LHG

January 6 - 8, 2017

Those booked in on the meet were asked to share transport where practicable on account of the limited parking above LHG and many heeded this request. The first arriver called in on the Australian renters of the neighbouring NT cottage and explained that over twenty mountaineers were arriving and gave them the dismal weather forecast. Within a few hours they had moved on to Ireland before the end of their planned stay. This alleviated the parking situation and only one car needed to be parked at by the ford.

Friday's heavy drizzle turning to light rain was braved by one who explored the ridge from Cathedral Quarry over Betsy Crag and Great Intake and onto Birk Fell, returning via Yewdale and the drying room.

The evening passed with new arrivals greeted by shouts of "Happy New Year" and provided with freshly made soup and bread. A number of minor improvements were made to the hut. Tasteful charity shop curtains in subtle greens and browns had been sized and re-hemmed by Carol for the main room's window. Michael, David and Andy fitted the replacement downstairs dehumidifier, moved the old one upstairs and added to it a timer and temporary heater. A duckboard was placed outside the shower and three replacement fluorescent tubes were fitted in the main room.

Our newly installed President laying the table for his evening meal put out the garlic bread. Returning with his plate of food he found the bread half-eaten by the hungry seamstress who had mistaken it for communal fare.

All jobs completed and the dry start to Saturday, there was no excuse for lingering indoors.

The largest party crossed the end of The Carrs to the Three Shire Stone and Red Tarn just in time to hear the cry of shock as a semi-naked young chap plunged into the tarn for a brief dip.

Our Treasurer continued on to descend via Oxendale into Langdale. The others traversed Cold Pike and Crinkle Crag. The Crinkles' bad step was variously tackled by one circling left, three scrambling up and the lithe one tunnelling through the cavers' route. Arriving at Three Tarns, some colourful kit was spotted nestling under a sheltering block. Investigating in case it was an injured walker this was found to be four abandoned unpacked sleeping bags, two liners, a tent and a range of clothing including a bra, all weighted down with stones. Too wet and heavy to carry out we tidied them up and noted their location. The ensuing speculation regarding what led to their abandonment kept them amused all the way the band to the ODG for a welcome pint. Later, 'Fix the Fells' volunteers were contacted with the stash's ten-figure grid reference and a request to remove it all. The return to LHG was made in the gathering gloom of night via Blea Tarn and the Ting Mound.

Meanwhile, our Treasurer met our Hut Sec by the ODG. The latter, finding the cottage fully booked, had taken B&B at High Park. The former used the Cumbria Way to Elterwater before returning to LHG by dusk. By Slater Bridge he met our Webmaster who on discovering that our Treasurer did not eat cheese, returned to his car for a replacement starter.

The Past President's party headed west to Fell Foot, doubled back to Wilson's Place and up to Stang End. Harvey, went up Greenburn and onto Wet Side Edge and once above the valley mists but below the higher cloud enjoyed some dramatically sunlit views of the fells. The Dovers also passed the Three Shire Stone then crossed both Cold Pike and Pike O'Blisco. Andrew Duxbury made a solo round of Holme Fell, Tarn Hows, Black Crag, Colwith, Loughrigg and Elterwater. The remaining senior three-some checked on a forthcoming venue, High Moss in the Duddon valley, and went on to Broughton.

The kitchen team made a gentle ascent of Wetherlam via the mines and Swirl How.

One nursing an injured ankle and the other recovering from the dreaded Christmas lurgy, they made a they made great play of needing to get back early and cook and hence avoided a proper mountain day. Everyone else thought the resulting dinner was well worth their sacrifice especially as returning parties were revived with tea and flapjacks.

Thanks to a lot of hard work several years ago by the then Hut Warden, Gordon Humphreys, and a small team of workers, everyone could be decanted into the Barn while the cottage was set out for the Saturday evening meal. All were well catered for and the ensuing evening was as convivial as ever. Thanks go especially to Robert Crowther and Andy Syme who also catered for the recent Christmas meet.

With two banished to the Barn, sleepers in the cottage enjoyed a quiet night. A slightly slower start on Sunday saw some heading home for family responsibilities. A couple of groups set off with the intention for traversing Helm Crag above Grasmere. The largest group drew on local knowledge rather than their GPSs and maps so ended up on the wrong side of the valley. On discovering the error, as some of the party had not been that way before, they continued up past Lang How then Little and Great Castle Hows in wetting cloud before descending to Easedale Tarn and via Sourmilk Gill for Grasmere.

Though we rarely get really good weather for mountain walking early in January, the LHG meet is rightly popular and the location allows for a good variety of outings. Your scribe believes the meet started around 1957 as a late February meet following on in the calendar from the well-established Hill Inn and, later, Marton Arms meets. It must have been around 1980 that the switch was made to January and at one point in that decade the number attending reach 47 requiring two sittings for the meal and the use of the two other NT cottages. This year's visit was altogether more relaxing.

Michael Smith

atrtendees:

Mick Borroff, President

Alan Clare

Derek Clayton

Ian Crowther

Paul Dover

Robert Crowther

Andrew Duxbury

David Hick

Richard Josephy

Pete McLeod (G)

Harvey Lomas

Michael Smith

Richard Smith

Andy Syme

Richard Taylor

Martyn Trasler

Carol Whalley

John Whalley

CAIRNGORMS, Linn of Dee

February 2 - 5

The journey northwards met darkening skies, rain and mist. Moments of optimism were dashed at the Glenshee Ski Centre where only brown grass and heather was visible in the swirling mist. The Centre looked moribund.

The small party of seven arrived at the Linn of Dee staying at the Cairngorm Club hut, Muir Cottage or Muir of Inverey. Extended in 1972 and recently refurbished, this well-equipped hut is comfortable and cosy, especially once the 'Clearview' wood burning stove was lit.

The assembled enjoyed a good meal in the Braemar Lodge Hotel as the wind moaned outside the stone walls in classic horror film style. Returning to Inverey, despite the less than propitious conditions the forecast for the following day provided the best opportunity for the weekend and preparations were made for an early start.

Friday dawned with a glimmer of lighter skies. David Hick, meet leader, Helen Smith, John Schofield and Michael Smith headed up towards Glas Moel from near the Glenshee ski centre with a view to completing the round to the east of the pass.



David Hick on Glas Moal

Strong winds were the theme of the day and the party having reached a point on the north spur at an elevation of approximately 850m were swept back to the road.

Industrious as ever the party sought consolation by walking into the lower reaches of lonely Glen Ey to the south of Inverey to seek the 'Colonel's Bed', the river flows through a narrow rocky chasm where the Black Colonel, or Col. John Farquharson of Inverey, hid after Killie-crankie.



The Colonel was not at home.

With light remaining the four drew lots to claim the three bicycles stored at the hut on this occasion for a spin past Mar Lodge and across Victoria Bridge. The bridge was completed in 1905 by King Edward VII, demonstrating the true love he had for his mother, whose reign had been cut short after only sixty-four years.

Further east Andy Syme, Peter Elliott and Chris Hilton were hoping to scale either Raeburns Gully or Central Buttress on Lochnagar. Little snow was visible below the scudding cloud.

The first clue as to the condition of the snow in the corrie was the thundering burn, Allt-na giubhsaich, which barred the way to continuing up the pleasant path. The party stepped gaily through the heather, the wind brought rain, hail and wet snow flakes for good measure.

Once in view of the corrie, the mist lifted briefly. It was obvious that neither route was in condition. A brief chat concluded that a closer view of the buttress followed by an exit up the broad south east shoulder to the corrie rim would compensate. However the same wind that battered Glas Moel tore across the corrie in all directions knocking the party off their feet and hampering forward progress. Andy bellowed instructions to turn back, but his words were carried away above the hill in an instant.

This was PE's first visit to Lochnagar and he was greatly impressed. He took great delight in the lichens which nestled below the canopy of rough heather.

Following this unfamiliar line across the heather PE set off several robust mountain hares.

A warming cup of tea was sought in Ballater where it was noted that a number of shops remain closed following the devastating floods in the last days of 2015.

DH as Meet Leader arranged the catering which was first class, the lasagne being particularly good which also served as breakfast and lunch for one greedy fellow.

On Saturday evening the party was joined by Bob Peckam, a long-standing member of the Craven Pothole Club who now resides in Inverness and is a friend of the Whalleys amongst others in the YRC.

Saturday dawned with dark skies. The Past President and DH, with determination, set off once again with Glas Moel in their sights. Bent to the wind, from the car park just to the south of the pass, they traversing Creag Leacach before reaching Glas Moel. The only proof of success was the record on MS's GPS as no view was glimpsed at any time. I do feel the use of GPS does smack of professionalism as ordinarily, given the conditions a YRC meet

would have recorded at least one party becoming hopelessly lost before a late arrival at their lodgings.

The remainder of the party stepped out along Glen Lui, then via Clais Fhearnaig to Glen Quoich. BP and JS followed the same path after returning from beyond Derry Lodge.

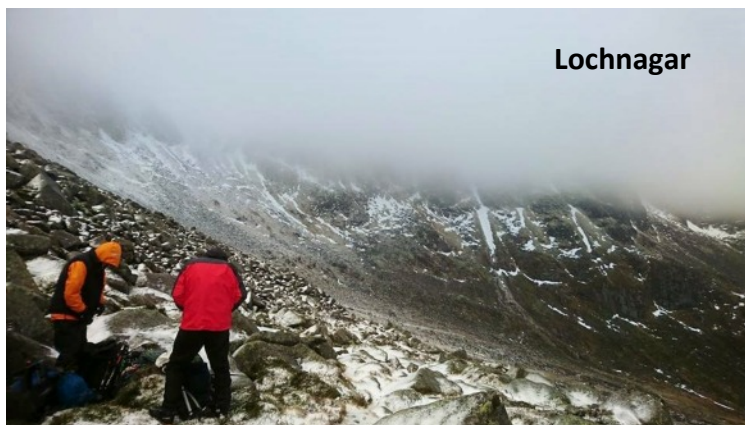
This short walk provided the opportunity to return later to Braemar to watch some inter-national rugby football and enjoy a few complimentary drinks, courtesy of the recently refurbished Invercauld Arms Hotel.

Sunday, brighter and calmer, witnessed an early departure after the usual chores.

DH, HS and MS enjoyed a short walk with views over Balmoral. The Queen was not at home.

We were unfortunate with the weather but our thanks go to the Cairngorm Club for maintaining an excellent Hut and to DH for organising the meet as well as providing excellent victuals.

Chris Hilton



Attendees:

Andy Symes,
Bob Peckham (Guest),
Christopher Hilton,
David Hick,
Helen Smith,
John Sutcliffe,
Michael Smith
and Peter Elliott.

RECENT FOREIGN FORAYS

Members have recently returned from activities in Nepal, trekking from Upper Dolpo to Mustang; from the Haut Jura straddling the Franco-Swiss border to the north of Geneva and also from Norway.

Full reports are being compiled and will appear in the next journal.

The photograph is of a celebratory beer at the end of the five-day Norway trip when they had just reached the Hafjell gondola station to descend into the valley



USEFUL WEB SITES

Climbing search engine	worldclimb.com	Mount Everest Foundation	mef.org.uk
Alpine Club	alpine-club.org.uk	Mountain Biking	trailquest.co.uk
Alpine Refuges (in French)	Refuges.info	Mountain Heritage Trust	thebmc.co.uk/mht
Bowline Club	bowline.f9.co.uk	Mountain Leader Training	Mltuk.org
Brecon Beacons National Park	breconbecon.org	Mountain Rescue Council	mountain.rescue.org.uk
Brittany Ferries	brittanyferries.com	Mountaineering Ireland	mountaineering.ie
British Orienteering	britishorienteering.org.uk	National Cycle Network	sustrans.org.uk
Cairngorm Club	cairngormclub.org.uk	National Trails	nationaltrail.co.uk
Caledonian Macbrayne ferries	calmac.co.uk	National Trust	nationaltrust.org.uk
Carlisle Mountaineering Club	carlislemc.co.uk	National Trust for Scotland	nts.org.uk
Coast to coast walk	coast2coast.co.uk	North York Moors National P.	moors.uk.net
Countryside Council for Wales	ccw.gov.uk	Northumberland National P.	nnpa.org.uk
Crag access database	climbingcraggs.co.uk	Open Spaces Society	oss.org.uk
Cyclist Touring Club	ctc.org.uk	Oread Mountaineering Club	oread.co.uk
DFDS Seaways	dfdsseaways.co.uk	Peak District National Park	peakdistrict.org
Duke of Edinburgh Awards	theaward.org	Rail enquiries	nationalrail.co.uk
English Heritage	english-heritage.org.uk	Rail Europe	raileurope.co.uk
Europe route planning	theaa.com/travelwatch	Royal Geographical Society	rgs.org
Fell & Rock Club	frcc.co.uk	Scottish avalanche forecasts	sais.gov.uk
Fell Runners Association	fellrunner.org.uk	Scottish Mountaineering C	mountaineering-scotland.org
Foreign & Colonial Office	fco.gov.uk	Ski Club of Great Britain	ukskiclub.co.uk
Fylde Mountaineering Club	fyldemc.org.uk	Snowdonia National Park	eryri-npa.gov.uk
Fjord Line	fjordline.co.uk	Southern Uplands way	dumgal.gov.uk/southernuplandway
Grampian Club	grampianclub.org	Speyside Way	speysideway.org
Gritstone Club	gritstoneclub.org.uk	Summits information	peakware.com
Irish Ferries	irishferries.com	The Climbers Club	climbers-club.co.uk
John Muir Trust	jmt.org	Travel guide- Lonely Planet	lonelyplanet.com
Long Distance Walkers Assoc.	ldwa.org.uk	Travel guide- Rough	roughguides.com
Maps & books	cordee.co.uk	Visitor information - Australia	australia.com
Maps & books	stanfords.co.uk	Visitor information - Canada	keepexploring.ca/travelcanada
Maps- Ordnance Survey	ordnancesurvey.co.uk	Visitor information - N Zealand	purenz.com
Maps - Harveys	harveymaps.co.uk	Visitor information - USA	visitusa.org.uk
Maps - Anquet	anquet.co.uk	Walking in Scotland	walkingwild.com
Maps - Cassini Historical	cassinimaps.co.uk	Walking in South West	cornwall-devon.com
Medical advice, high altitude	high-altitude-medicine.com	Walking in the Lakes	lakedistrictoutdoors.co.uk
Medical advice, high altitude	medex.org.uk	Weather, Scottish Avalanches	sais.gov.uk
Medical advice, travel abroad	masta.org	West Highland Way	west-highland-way.co.uk
Medication etc.	firstaid4sport.co.uk	Wolverhampton M C	wolverhamptonmc.co.uk
Midland Ass. of Mountaineers	themam.co.uk	World Health Organisation	who.int/en/
MOD- access to military land	access.mod.uk	Yorkshire Dales National P.	yorkshiredales.org

YRC MERCHANDISE

As different arrangements have been made for the provision of Club-badged items, the Club has stock it is selling off at heavily discounted prices.

In the Club colours of bottle green and with the embroidered logo there are the following items in various sizes.

Cotton Sweatshirt - Fleece gillet/ body warmer - Full and half zipped fleeces

Also available are YRC embroidered sew-on badges, windscreen stickers and duffle bags

Contact Andy Syme for more information.



**The Club's rules and bye-laws are printed in
issue 11 of series 13 of the Journal, Summer 2011**

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

Additional copies of the journals can be provided at cost whilst stocks last.

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The same applies to any photographs provided.

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Requests should be addressed to the Club's Honorary Secretary who will advise on any costs and availability.

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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

Articles and items appearing without accreditation are written and / or compiled by the Editor.

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

Deadline for material for the next journal is June 30th 2017

THE YRC

The Yorkshire Ramblers Club

Established 1892



The Mountaineering, Exploration and Caving Club

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