

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
(Affiliated to B.M.C.)

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 1977

GROVEL

Fylde's answer to the Steam Team - "The Infant Prodigy" and Dave Archer successfully climbed "Zero Gully" on Ben Nevis. "Vanishing Gully" also took a bashing. As far as I know Zero was last climbed by a Fylde member several years back by the late Dave "Fingers" Morris. Though Ken Martin, who lives beneath the Ben at Fassfern, has no doubt been bending his neck on hard routes this winter. (It should be remembered that Ken made an epic ascent of Vanishing in March '73, using a vanishing axe!)

Considering the amount of snow we've had since November conditions, up-to-date, have been variable. If you want to have a fair crack at the harder ice routes the answer seems to be to live in the Highlands for the season. Mediocre to reasonable, though with plenty of spindrift, conditions can be had between successive low fronts if you are there to nab in. Some of the most successful, current, Scottish and English ice-climbers in the Alps, Terry King (used to climb with Colin Green, you know) Gordon Smith, and Alex McIntyre (Shroud, Central Couloir, etc.) who might have done nearly all of the hard routes on the Ben, plus some new one (Indicator Wall, Slav Route) between them, have all, at one time or another, spent winters living in caravans near Fort William, poised to have a prod when conditions proved favourable.

In Glencoe that landed personage Mr C Green made a nifty ascent of "The Gash" (3/4) in poor to medium conditions, early in February. John Sealey, Barbara and Pete Roscoe had a long epic in "No. 4 Gully" (3/4) on Aonach Dubh, West Face, in poor conditions. They joined the happy throng of night climbers by finishing the route at dusk (Pete is seriously thinking of hocking that dubious trophy "the mug", before the next annual dinner - he says he is concerned about all aspects of raising funds for the club.)

Ice conditions have been good in Wales this winter; easy routes were in condition as early as December 1st on the Black Ladders. High above Ogwen on "Glogwyn Du Gully" (4; short and technical) Colin exercised his new axe early in January. I repeated the route with Dave Hinton and it is a climb that I highly recommend. Being one of the highest gullies in Wales it is often in condition when the nearby Kitchen is not.

Meanwhile back on rock, Shepherd's affixianado "The Infant Poodigy" recently ascended "The Bludgeon" (extreme climbing for 10 feet to the Belvedere). This is a relatively safe climb to fall from as several Fylde members can verify. The Bludgeon: real Cosmic baby!

While all this was going on Keith Lockett has been underground. When he was there he did "Mere Gill"; it is a high standard of potting achievement that contains a 560 foot pitch without ladders. Keith's partner in grime was Basil Brush (he keeps popping up everywhere!)

WORKING WEEKENDS:-

Stair: November 5th

The working weekend was brought forward to allow members to do a little work in the grounds and put on a small bonfire for the children. New fences were erected hedges tidied, common room cleaned, scrubbed and painted, and toilets, kitchen (with its new cooker) and drying room washed out.

Saturday evening was celebrated with a bonfire, followed by roast potatoes, treacle toffee and home brewed plonk all accompanied by pyrotechnic displays laid on by the kids.

After an early working start on Sunday the afternoon was free for attempts on the local summits (Grizedale Pike), with the big mountain men going across to Shepherd's to do Fisher's Folley, Little Chamonix, Shepherd's Chimney, Scorpion and then to Brown Slabs to witness various trials of ability in the failing light.

Thanks are recorded to those people whose conscientious efforts contribute to an ever improving standard of accommodation.

P. H. Roscoe

Little Langdale:

The usual party of the Earles, the Sealeys and friend (perm any one or two from about four; in this case it was P. Clarke) worked very hard to bring the cottage up to scratch and to commence the substantial improvements which the place deserves (denied for so long by the great, but diminishing, debt). It seems a pity the Club can't summon a bit more enthusiasm, but I suppose as we seem to be practically the only people who use the hut regularly its only fair that we do all the work. The particularly dirty jobs of course fell to the Junior section, who were also in attendance.

The car park was tidied up and vast quantities of kindling acquired as a result of Mr. Sharples's pollarding (that sounds nasty Dave) last year. Each bed now has a new mattress; all the old ones were burnt in a magnificent blaze. Members will not be surprised to learn that "Pyro Sealey" failed to ignite the pile, even with a blow lamp. However, combustion was eventually achieved with the aid of a few sticks - I should have been a boy scout. The men's dormitory was cleaned, and three walls and the ceiling of the other dormitory painted. The fourth wall was demolished prior to its reconstruction on a sounder basis. In the meantime, it will be known as the Bam-Boo room, for obvious reasons.

Dave Earle

Stair Hut Meet: 6/7 January

In view of the meet leader's impending parenthood again, I was promoted to the exalted position of deputy meet leader; a lonely post for only one other couple and a Mr. P. Clarke disturbed the peace of Stair.

Saturday saw the most fabulous weather for months, with blue skies above and mist lingering below. Derwentwater lay under a great sea of cotton wool which lapped silently against the hills.

Down into the mist and onto Seathwaite, from where an hour's hard work brought us to the sun and breathless air again. All around the mist was breaking revealing the patchwork of fields still white with frost and the lakes blue and still

Along the Gable traverse we went, with Snaefell sticking out of the sea of clouds, until we reached Napes Needle. Here Paul gleefully produced a rope from his sack and with John did Needle Arete before progressing to the summit. We followed the traverse further round and scrambled up Sphinx ridge; revelling in the panorama which extended from the Scottish mountains protruding through their mist, down to the clag of Blackpool.

BUSINESS NEWS

RISE IN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Those members who wish to retain membership of the club and have not yet paid their subscriptions should do so by March 31st.

SINGLE FULL MEMBER: £2.50 per annum

MARRIED COUPLE SUBS: £4.00 per annum

BODDINGTON'S DRAUGHT BITTER UNTIL 1 P.M.

The above named nourishment may be obtained well past midnight on Saturdays at Charley's Bar, Rigby Road (Royal Pavilion) 35 p. after 10.30 p.m. Distinctive atmosphere

DAVE SHARPLES RIDES IN AS SOC. SEC.

Dave, noted for good socials years ago, is back in the driving seat. To help this fund/fun raising side of the club send in as many ideas as possible to Dave (address in imminent booklet). Thanks go to Keith for the past year.

NEW EDITOR FOR NEWSLETTER

Rick Reeve: new editor of Newsletter.

Write to him about what you have been doing climbing, exploring, walking, etc. and about your views on the huts, how things can be improved, meets, etc. etc.

ADDRESS: 16 Dover Road, Maghull, Liverpool L31 5JH.

NEW VAGABONDS BOOKING SEC.

To book PANT Y FRON contact Andrew Barnes, 36 Langdale Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside, L63 3AW. Home phone: 051-334-5413. Business 051-645-2000 Ext. 8170. Important bloke is Andrew!

LOOKING INTO THE DIM AND NON-EXISTENT PAST

Perhaps a reason why you don't see the old pals in the club anymore is because they cleared off long ago (driven out?). In my possession I have Brian Wilkinson's original book of members. It has been passed to each Editor since 1971; there have been numerous crossings-out/additions as members come and members go.

187 members in B.W.'s script (joined pre-1972)

60 members in B.W.'s script remain.

This leaves 100 (62%) people in the club who have joined since 1972. There are 343 names (crossed and uncrossed) in the book. This means that 183 people have left the club since the early seventies. Where do we go from here?

PETE ROSCOE MADE HONORARY LIFE MEMBER

Joining Mr and Mrs R. E. Legge, Mr and Mrs J. Jowett and Mr and Mrs J Cooper, Mr and Mrs P Roscoe have entered the hallowed ranks of Honorary Life Members. Pete was a driving force in the acquisition of the Stair Hut and has initiated many building programmes since. It is only fitting that the Club's highest token of regard be bestowed upon someone who so often has given up his own time in club service for the benefit of his fellow members.

NUCLEAR WASTE PLAN FOR LAKE DISTRICT

The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority is at present working on a research programme to investigate the characteristics of hard rock formations at depths of up to 2,000 ft. and included in the survey are areas around Eskdale, Ennerdale and Skiddaw.

The locations may become underground dumping sites for nuclear waste.

The UKAEA have said that no actual drilling sites had been identified as yet. They added that the aim of the investigation was to find large stable solid blocks of hard rock.

A case for lobbying your MP., here (address: House of Commons).

SUMMARY REPORT OF 28th A.G.M. (23.2.77)

Only a fair turnout: about fifty odd full members plus ten introductory members. Chris Heald and Pete Latimer travelled in from Leeds for the meeting - well done!

In his address the Chairman said that on the hill a high standard of climbing was well maintained. However, within the Club, divisions between the age-groups were greater now than for many years and this was a discouraging trend. Furthermore, the increase in wanton damage and vandalism at the huts had to stop.

The Treasurer stated that: '76 was a good financial year, with the club accruing over £700 through increased Guest/Other Clubs use; but use by members had slumped considerably. Social expenses broke even (though the figures were misleading owing to the inclusion of Rangers Fees); running costs for '77 were gloomily projected - Stair costs - £800, just inside expected receipts; Little Langdale costs - £550 well in excess of anticipated income.

Regarding Future Club Policy it was accepted that a shower and a new type of water-heater (for the wash room) be installed at Little Langdale. A Sports Council Grant, tarmacing the car park and turning area, cleaning up the bin area, were all proposed for future discussion by the Committee. At Stair, more bed space is to be provided by extending the men's dormitory into part of the common room; certain wall surfaces are to be panelled. Gas cooking facilities are to be introduced.

Annual subscriptions were raised to £2.50 per annum, and married subscriptions were raised to £4.00 per annum forthwith. It was agreed that part of the new rate would pay for printing/postage costs of the Newsletter, which under new editorship, is to be published bi-monthly on a regular basis. For those still to pay subs for 1977 (due 1st Jan) the new rate applies; final date for acceptance is March 31st, 1977. (see note on this elsewhere). Overnight guest charges have been raised to 60p.

With the proviso that both huts had to be free of "other club" bookings Mr D Smith's idea of "Family Weekends", at one of the huts, was carried.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER.

Miss A Hall is admitted as a full member of the Club.

: The following members were elected:

Chairman:	Mike Tolley	Langdale Hut Sec:	Dave Earle
Vice Chairman:	Pete Roscoe	Stair Hut Sec:	Derrick Smith
Secretary:	Pete Latimer	Booking Secretary:	John Sealey
Treasurer:	George Parker	Auditor:	Geoff Kipling
Social Secretary:	Bill Crowshaw	Committee Members:	Frank Lord and Jack Jowett

Peter Ray and Chris Heald serve for one more year on the Committee

- Some reshuffling but not many new faces. Bill Crowshaw succeeds Lurch as Social Secretary. A dedicated exponent of the International rope, Bill will be looking towards France or Norway for social inspiration. Frank Lord and Jack Jowett were elected to the Committee. Both long time members of the Club, they offer a continuity of experience, and expertise in equipment sales and high altitude piano tuning.

The reader may now be saying how come we have all these long standing members on the Committee when we now have so many new young members? Good question but then if very few younger members bother to attend the A.G.M. the power structure will remain as it has done in times past. The remedy lies in the hands of anyone who is sufficiently interested to change the situation.

New Members:

We welcome Thom. Carroll, Russell Smith, D. A. Farrell and David and Anne Parker as new members. Barrie Stott, Ken Hale and Margaret and Christine Jowett become full members.

ODDS AND SODS:

: The Rangers now has a telephone: Blackpool 3308. Use it on a Wednesday to arrange week-end trips etc.

Apologies to any new members who were misled by the false address of the Rangers given in the last Newsletter. The correct address is: Fleetwood Road, Norbreck (adjacent to the Golf Driving Range).

: George requests the payment of this year's subscriptions - due on the 1st January 1974.

: The Club now has space in the Gazette & Herald each week for Mountaineering articles. Anyone wishing to write a piece would be very welcome - forward it to me and I'll submit it. N.B. Anyone does mean anyone - we're not just interested in the exploits of hard climbers. They form a minority in the Club and shouldn't extinguish anything that beginners or walkers have to say. Interest comes from the style of an article - not necessarily its content.

"Dave Morris Memorial Appeal" : is being arranged by Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team. Any individual donations should be sent direct to the fund: c/o Pete Chandler, Banks Ironmongers, Main Street, Cockermouth.

The money will be used to buy gear for the Rescue Team.

: Easter Meet - GLEN DOLL : The hut booking has been cancelled because of lack of support and arrangement of an alternative meet to Glen Brittle, Skye.

IN SEARCH OF SNOW

PETE ROSCOE

The Club have for many years organised an annual coach meet to the Lakeland hills to seek out the snow covered heights. To the Mountaineer the pleasures of a summer day are as nothing compared with the joys of crisp snow underfoot and ice-axe cutting steps; with fragments of ice tinkling their way downwards as the climber makes his way to the summit of his chosen peak.

Unfortunately, these days are seldom. This time we managed occasional glimpses of the snow covered tops from the coach as we approached Patterdale. The majority of the party decided to do Striding Edge. This approach to Helvellyn is enjoyed in summer as a classic ridge walk, but under a mantle of snow it takes on a more serious aspect and has been the scene of serious accidents.

During the walk we enjoyed the company of two National Park Wardens and heard at first hand their numerous accounts of the trials and tribulations of patrolling such areas of the Lake District. Further evidence of the respect demanded under the existing conditions became obvious when the party had to render assistance to a climber, injured in a slip on the snow covered rocks, and escort him down to the village.

The summit of Helvellyn resembled some kind of Arctic waste; photos were taken of ice-covered eyebrows and hair. It was uncomfortable to linger in the driving wind so we dropped down quickly past Grizedale Tarn back to the warmth of Patterdale and the coach to exchange memories of the day and hope for better conditions next time.

SUNDAY MEETS

GEORGE PARKER

The Sunday meets organised by Derrick and myself for those members unable to get away for the whole week-end have been held each month since October. More trips are planned for the future. Anyone interested, please contact Derrick or myself

VAGABONDS CLUB 25th ANNUAL DINNER

COLIN GREEN

Imagine the scene at Mant Peris on February 16 with over 25 cars manoeuvring in the immediate vicinity of the Vagabonds' Cottage - Mant-y-fron. Add a force 8 gale, torrential rain, a boozy Club dinner and an after dinner barrel and you have some idea of what conditions were like in the cottage. A very hospitable lot, though, these Vagabonds and quite a bit smoother than the name suggests. The dinner was held at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis and an excellent meal was provided. The Vagabonds clearly realised the importance of the official F.M.C. guest who was seated on the top table. (Where else) and supplied with free wine. They also made sure I won a bottle of whisky in the raffle. It was shortly after this point that things began to blurr; but an authoritative source tells me that the festivities at the cottage died down at about 6 a.m. I died down about four hours previously.

On the mountaineering side, the Club, which is only 45 strong, boasts a number of hard lads including Pete Hinks and Alan Rouse who are currently in South America trying to put up a new route on Fitzroy. Rouse has also

soloed most of the routes on Cloggy, including the Boldest (6a). My week-end mountaineering was a walk over Cricht on Saturday in rain and mist and a visit to the tropical gardens at Tremadoc on Sunday to do - "Clapton's Crack" (V.S.), and "One step in the clouds" (V.S.) I was also involved in rescuing a climber who took a nasty 60 ft. plus fall off "Christmas Curry" and was nearly cut in half by a waist tie. A good case for a Whillan's Harness!

Overall an excellent and eventful week-end; we must include the Vagabonds on our guest list for the next F.M.C. dinner.

(Very good Colin - but why no mention of your companion at Dinner? We're not surprised you retired early).

THE CONVERSION OF ST. JOHN

THE PAINTER AND DECORATOR

(Or how John Sealey, on the road to Glencoe, discovered the elixir of effortless Mountaineering).

And it came to pass that as St. John drove along Loch Lomondside there came a great blinding flash. And a voice spake to him saying fear not, for thou has not hit the wall, nor hast thou forced someone into the ditch. But I am the Way, the Truth and the Light. Follow me and thou shalt inherit the UTOPIA of effortless Mountaineering.

Arise ye before the cock crows for the eighth time and tie two great planks of wood to thy feet and seek ye the everlasting stairway unto the Heavens by the smell of the diesel. And take not of the grape, or of the hop, or of the barley during the day but seek ye refreshment only at the Brew Shops dedicated to St. P.H.R., patron saint of tea drinkers.

And on the first day St. John rose before the appointed hour, and was the first up, and the multitude were amazed and marvelled at this phenomenon. And St. John told them that he had been shown the Way, and he girded up his loins with garments which had belonged to St. Raf, patron saint of upside down skiers, saying these shall be my inspiration. And he went forth and found the everlasting stairway and marvelled at the ease with which he ascended the hill.

And he took not of the grape, nor of the top or barley, but skied down only unto the brew shops. And HE smiled on St. John kindly and provided pretty maidens to delight his eye as an added bonus and St. John, and his disciple St. Fred were grateful saying, these are much improved on the usual Amazons found on the hill.

And on the second day St. John again rose before the cock crowed for the eighth time, even though the clag was down and the rain fell copiously. And the multitude were sorely tried. And they attempted to reason with him saying remember thou the good times we used to have together and of the festering and the taking of the hop at lunchtime.

But St. John spoke agrily to them, and smote them with his tongue (even his disciple St. Fred in whom the light was waning in direct proportion to the increase in wind and rain) saying fester not in they smelly pits dhidle bretheren; oh lazy swine (letters of resignation to the Secretary please) but follow me for I have been shown the Way. By this time the multitude were dumbfounded.

And he went forth and sacrificed more of his shackles on the altar of the everlasting stairway, even those which he had brought to pay for his Great Feast.

And on the third day, in even gloomier weather, St. John rose again even though it was not opening time and the multitude knew he was truly converted.

N.B. There will be a grand sale of climbing gear at 18 North Promenade St. Annes; soon.

REMEMBER:

BEN CAMPBELL KELLY "THE TROLL WALL" MAY 1st.

FOR SALE: Humanic Dynafit lace up Ski boots; ideal for beginners
One pair size 5 $\frac{1}{2}$; one pair size 8
Very good condition. Only £5 for each pair. Contact Chris Heald

FOR SALE: Pete Hutchinson SNOWLINE DUVET. Large size; good condition.
Red rip-stop outer; blue cambric inner £25 Contact Chris Heald

CIRCULAR

J. MUIR

One may fancy the clouds themselves as plants,
springing up in the skyfields at the call of the sun,
growing in beauty until they reach their prime,
scattering rain and hail like berries and seeds,
then wilting and dying.

Where are the rain drops now?

In winged vapour rising, some are already hastening back to the sky,
some have gone into the plants

creeping through invisible doors into the round rooms of cells,

some are locked in crystals of ice, some in rock crystals

some in porous moraines to keep their small springs flowing,

some have gone journeying on in the rivers,

to join the larger rain drop of the ocean.

From form to form, beauty to beauty

ever changing, never resting.

NEWSFLASH

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTION

A trip to Thwaites Brewery, Blackburn has been arranged for the near future. The date will be announced later.