



FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 1999

FMC 50th Anniversary book

The committee has for some time now been discussing a plan to mark the clubs 50th year with a picture book. The idea is simple; to try and celebrate the clubs glorious past through pictures.

A small sub committee consisting of, Dave Wood, Martin Dale, John Wiseman, Dave Earl & Steve Wrigley has been set up to progress the task. Dave Earl has already been acting as a focal point for the submission of photographs and he has received photos from a dozen club members already.



On the 11th Nov the sub-committee met to flesh out a grand master plan. This is summarised below and has been ratified by the full committee at the meeting held on 17th Nov.

- A free copy to all current paid up members (two for joint members)
- A free copy to all intro members at the time of publishing who subsequently become full members
- The book to be available by the end of April 2000
- Editorial decisions to be made by the sub-committee named above
- The sub committee to work within a prescribed budget approved by the full committee (£4,000 maximum)
- The sub-committee will endeavour to generate income from the sale of books to ex-members, shop sales, donations etc.

In order for this project to be a success we require club members to send us their photos of their club related activities. Slides or prints are welcome. The guidelines below should be used when submitting material:

- All pictures to be submitted with a few words outlining the relevance to the club; names, dates, locations & anecdotes.
- People central to a composition to be past or present members
- Subject matter to celebrate the club ie it need not be an official club meet as long as it is of relevance to the club
- This is not a club history but is aiming to capture the spirit of the FMC.

The deadline for submission is Friday 7th Jan 2000. All submissions to Dave Earl or if more convenient to one of the sub committee members.

Steve Wrigley (*on behalf of the anniversary book sub-committee*)

NOTICE BOARD

PEMBROKE

During the last month I have contacted a number of people who have previously expressed interest about going to Pembroke. I have very recently received the brochure for 2000. Because of the late Easter most properties are only available Sat to Sat for the whole week. Prices are higher than originally given when me made a provisional booking. The price could be as high as £50 p.p. for either part of or full week.

I can book these properties for those who definitely want to go. If interested, give me a call so we can book something if enough people are interested.

Dave Wood

JORDAN EASTER 2000

It is proposed to go to Jordan for the 2 weeks spanning Easter i.e. Sat 15th to Sat 29th April but it is proving impossible to get any flight information after 10th April. I understand there is an Israeli holiday at the time so flights will be very busy.

The cost on 10th April is £245 from Gatwick or £275 from Manchester. I think that £300 is a maximum. In view of the problems it may well be a non starter unless anyone wants to go earlier to get cheaper flights. I cannot so someone else would need to organise the trip - any volunteers?

I will keep checking so please keep in touch. As a last resort we may end up in Spain again.

Andy Dunhill

FULL MEMBERSHIP

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Les has confirmed with OUT-DOOR ACTION, BLACKBURN that they will give 10% discount on climbing hardware only, not clothing, tents, etc.

HUT AVAILABILITY

1999 / 2000

20 / 21 Nov	Langdale
27 / 28 Nov	Stair
04 / 05 Dec	Langdale
11 / 12 Dec	Stair
18 / 19 Dec	Both
25 / 26 Dec	Both
01 / 02 Jan	Both
08 / 09 Jan	Langdale
15 / 16 Jan	Stair
22 / 23 Jan	Langdale
29 / 30 Jan	Chester
05 / 06 Feb	Langdale
12 / 13 Feb	Stair
19 / 20 Feb	Langdale
26 / 27 Feb	Stair

STAIR HUT

* The heater is cutting out because people put clothes on top, therefore please don't put clothes on top!

BOTH HUTS

- * New Fees, £2 pp / night for members, £4 pp / night for guests.
- * Don't forget to complete both the book and the envelope with name and dates.
- * GAS, if it runs out, please replace it (or advise the hut warden to replace it).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Anyone who wishes to propose a motion for the AGM please send it with the name of the proposer and seconder to Les Ward by 6th January.

Here it is, Winter again. I must admit it's not my favourite season because it gets dark so quickly. However, it is not that bad after such a good summer. The summer meets were very popular, not only the climbing ones but the walking ones as well. They were so popular that some more were agreed outside the summer syllabus. I did try very hard - silly me! - to get Social Secretary to write something about the summer meets but no luck.

The newsletter was due to go out about 3 weeks ago, but I had several requests to wait for a few days to get some more things in and it is always so easy to leave it a few more days!

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Millenium experience!

Marian Solera (Editor)

CLUB MEETS

HUT TO HUT

June 1999

OK, as "a man of few words", I'll be brief. After last year's hut to hut (or swimming event!), there was no way the weather could have been any worse. This year, on the Saturday morning, looking out towards Wetherlam, the sky was overcast but it wasn't raining (always a good omen!)

The decision was made to go over the tops. This meant first walking along the bottom track of Fell Foot Farm and then up the road to the Three Shires Stone. The walk up the road drags on for a while, but at least it gets you on the tops fairly quickly. From the Three Shires Stone we carried on to Red Tarn, the Crinkles and a crowded Bowfell. After a brief stop, we made good time over Esk Pike and down to the Mountain Rescue box at Styhead Tarn. Here, we had to diplomatically persuade (or con) Clive Bell into going up Aaron Slack rather than head down to take the low route back to the hut. We traversed around Gable to join Aaron Slack half way up, thus giving Clive less opportunity to cop out and head down. There must have been some kind of organised walk taking place, as Green Gable had a swarm of jean clad townie's trying to decide which walkie talkie to use to call the people ahead to let them know they were so far behind because of the weight of all the walkie talkies!! We carried on, crossing the road at Honister before the last pull up to the Tarn at Dale Head. From here it's all downhill!

Sunday and the weather was not so kind, overcast and threatening rain. Not all of us were taken with the idea of walking back. John and June got a lift down Borrowdale, before walking back over High Raise. The two of us set off from the hut to walk back. At the top of the road by Skelgill farm, we could see Donald following on behind. We carried on slowly, waiting for Donald to catch up, but Don never caught us up. With the weather not improving, we opted for an alternative route back to Little Langdale. Don had decided to head over the Col at Cat Bells.

We had a pleasant walk to Keswick, indulged in a cream cake, jumped on a bus to Grasmere and strolled over Silver How to the hut. (An excellent way to return on the hut to hut, we'll do

the same next year!)

A great weekend, thanks to those who ferried the gear from hut to hut. And does anyone know if Don ever made it back?

Jon & Avril

CHESTER SWAP, LLANBERIS 25/26 Sept

Due to Mike Sissons having an attack of the Chamonixes, I ended up leading this meet as well. A small team of just six of us made the most of generally poor weather and conditions. Saturday was quite bad. We headed off to Gogarth, only to turn round half way across Anglesey stopped by torrential rain. It did look brighter over the Ormes, however, no sooner had we got out of the car on the Marine Drive that it started to rain. Steady and persistent stuff. Tolley and Martin Bennett retreated to the car, then the café to do the crossword. Bill Clarke, Ashley and myself were made of sterner stuff though and went down to the Mumbo Jumbo caves where we had some fun on an E2 which didn't have a name. Ashley bouldered, then Martin returned and tied on for a bit of sport.

The rain eventually abated so I decided to look at *Contusion Direct* E4 on the Mayfair wall. This proved to be doable so everyone but Tolley, had a go on a top rope. Even Martin, who took some persuading that he was capable of *French* 6C+, made a good job of it. Ashley, who is in the British Youth climbing team, faltered just short of the anchors on the second crux. By now it was raining again but I couldn't resist a little play on *Axle Attack* E5 F 7A+. However, greasy holds and fatigue put paid to my success. Time to go to the pub.

Sunday was better, so off to Anglesey, with Simon Fenna swelling our number. Martin decided we'd like *Rhoscolyn*, so we went there. We did like it, Mike, particularly, so after his lack of enthusiasm the day before. *The Sun* was out though, literally! It had a small stream running out of it. So, also were nearly all the other routes. Martin led *Savage Sunbird* E2 very well, and everyone followed, some placing more gear than others. It's a great cliff and I urge you to go there but a word of warning – it does seep after rain. The usual beer in a pub followed in Abergele of all places.

Not a classic weekend then, but one that should have been enjoyed by a few more of you idle gits out there.

Martin Dale

LUNDY

Aug 1999

Saturday saw a full team (14) assembled on Ilfracombe pier ready for off. Some divers staying in the same pub as us had had their trip to Lundy cancelled that same day because of very strong winds so the less seaworthy of us were not looking forward to the crossing. Paul Taylor had flown in from Italy but had arrived minus his gear so was seen practically shopping for underpants, etc.

The crossing proved to be nothing out of the ordinary until we tried to land. The MS Oldenburg now has a new landing pier which unfortunately rules out the need to transfer to small boats. However, on this rare occasion the wind was blowing from the east and a big swell was running. The landing was nothing short of scary and we were all glad to get ashore, most folks heading straight to the Marisco Tavern for a pint to calm their nerves.

The Saturday turned out to be one of the best days so everyone raced off to climb rock. Simon Fenna and Dave Cundy having a particularly good day finishing with *American Beauty*, one of Dave's bogey routes. A good job it was too, because despite a fine start, Sunday soon turned into a washout and *American Beauty* wet, for the rest of the week. Monday was a bit better but stuff was still wet from Sunday. Tuesday was the killer though. Rain all day and very heavy overnight left all the crags suffering on Wednesday. With some very large heavy showers still packing in and rivers running down most routes, you had to pick your route. Rae Hughes and Mike Sissons did just that – *Eclipse* VS proved a little bit of a battle for the lads with Rae giving us a couple of 20 footers to admire. These falls also gave Mike a lift too as he had omitted to place an upward pull nut on his belay. They did, however, remember to place a rope down the soil arete escape, which, because of the rain was a little more solid than usual. Thursday / Friday thankfully picked up with Friday back to business as usual with a wonderful day. A big team went round the island on the boat to be entertained by seals and basking sharks. Dave Cundy got his canopy up and flew Jenny Cove. I now feel the boy must definitely know what he is doing.

Saturday was another perfect day but unfortunately we had to leave early for a change, so only a six o'clock start by Simon Fenna, Phil Collinson and Les Ward rewarded them with an ascent of the slide via Satans Slip E1. The rest of us who couldn't get up that early had a leisurely sunbathe down on the beach. So not a classic trip but the Lundy debutees, Mike and Anna Sissons, Les Ward, Phil Collinson, Melissa Bock and Rae Hughes had a good time. The rest of us, Dave Wood and Hal, Andy Dunhill and Christine, Paul Taylor, Simon Fenna, Dave Cundy and myself had the usual good, mellow time one can only have on Lundy. Highlights of the week were Simons Cabbage experience keeping us all amused on rainy tuesday (ask to see the photos), Raes' backward dive off *Eclipse*, Basking sharks a gogo and doing another second ascent of a Gibson Horror route.

We'll be back in 2001.

Martin Dale

HIGH CRAGS

24/25 July

The weather on this meet was poor on the Saturday. However, on Sunday we did visit High Crag, as the meet title suggested. The trudge up from Gatesgarth, Buttermere was enjoyed by some and loathed by others. The crag was in good fettle, despite the poor weather on Saturday. It was actually the third time I had been already this year so I let Melissa have a lead, which she did with style up *Delilah* VS.

Various other routes were ascended by those present, including the tricky *Psycho*. Well worth its E1. However, the highlight of the meet was the swim in Buttermere to finish. I think, or was that on another occasion that I went to High Crag this year?

Martin Dale

MEMBERS ARTICLES

Wind River

by Jennie Tolley

Phil Lee, Mike Tolley, Jennie Tolley and Martin Bennett.

The last time we met Al and Mandy Peel socially they extolled the advantages of going to Wind River on our then forthcoming trip to Colorado. You could hire horses to pack your gear on, ride a horse in, stay overnight at a Ranch and have an evening meal and breakfast before departing. Arrive in a wonderful stunning and remote area with the minimum of effort. Oh, and the ability to ride a horse wasn't a necessity – you could just sit astride the horse and feel pleased you weren't walking. Wonderful. We were totally convinced that the Wind River trip was going to be a must on our itinerary. I must remember to pack the padded cycling shorts!

JULY 1st 1999

We left Moab and headed north to Wyoming. The trip was permeated throughout the day with frequent stops to phone a list of Ranches, to book the necessary horses. Martin was the phoning person whilst we helpfully supplied him with coinage and then waited while he made the necessary contacts. The results were frustratingly negative – although we did learn of possible choices of pack animals – llamas or goats as well as horses. But we didn't fancy riding the first two. Towards the end we would have booked squirrels if we could, we were getting desperate.

Realisation gradually dawned, back packing was the only answer. Ugh!

By horseback we would have travelled the 13 miles from Lander. We decided to approach from a different direction which reduced the mileage to 8 but this was over a Col and more strenuous. From the main highway we drove over 35 miles on dust tracks to arrive at Big Sandy Trail head. And with what I considered to be huge heavy and unwieldy rucksacks, we trudged the first 5 miles to Big Sandy Lake gradually gaining height. The up and over the Col was mentally discouraging as the Col dropped down to a lake – another up and over to drop down to another lake and finally a third up and over to eventually reach the circ of The Towers and Lake Lonesome. The path over the Col had disintegrated and the boulder field was hard work around the lakes. But it was worth it.

The position was stupendous – I couldn't believe it was real, it was more like a view from a picture postcard. Gigantic soaring cliffs, blue sky and a panoramic view from whatever direction you looked. But then there were the mosquitos which added a painful and itchy reality!

Set up camp amidst the boulders, ate our dehydrated tasteless meal and went through the bear discouragement procedure – by removing any food, smelly stuff like soap and toothpaste, even the T-shirt you'd worn when cooking – and suspending same in a rucksack away from bear accessible rock, high in the air and definitely away from the tent.

The next day prompted an early start. Martin and Phil to do the impressive North East Ridge of Pin-gora 5.9. Mike and I to do Wolf's Head Arête, 5.6 – a 19 pitch ridge with outstanding views. It was the 4th abseil where I met my demise by foolishly abseiling diagonally. My foot slipped and I pendulumed off to end up in a gully in which I made contact with my head. The bleeding was profuse – as surface head and ear cuts are. Mike (who couldn't see where I had ended up) actually shouted "speak to me Jennie!" - which must be a first as he usually encourages me to shut up. I said I was "bleeding to death" but he didn't think so and tied by head up with my T-shirt to staunch the flow. Our few first aid plasters were of little use.

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Three abseils and one Col ascent later we arrived back at camp where Martin fortified us with lots of coffee. Mike attempted to clean my head with boiled water. Martin's contribution to the medical kit was an army issue bandage given to him by an ex-service man. When he undid the packaging it was dated 1943. A local camper donated a nice big stretchy bandage from his brand new first aid kit. Boxed.

It was a long headachey night.

The next morning Phil and Martin did Wolf's Head Arête in half the time it had taken Mike and I and descended to the Trail head. Amazingly fit guys! Mike and I simply descended to the Trail head at a more sedate pace – me, pursued by a cloud of mosquitoes – I wonder why? Perhaps they liked my new red punk hairdo? Phil definitely got the award for the most mosquito bites to fit on one back, that I have ever seen.

Strange but true. A couple from Leeds were also camping in the circ and another couple we met at Big Sandy Trail head had just returned from the same place and lived in Silverdale. I always thought it was the Dutch who got everywhere.

Everest on a bike

by John Denmark

EVEREST ON A BIKE? TWICE??

Not really. My summer holiday was spent sitting on the saddle of my bike pedalling furiously to get from Land's End to John O'Groats. This is affectionately known as an "End to End". E2E would seem suitable and saves typing. This was not a solo effort but an organised "tour" courtesy of the CTC (Cyclist's Touring Club); all accommodation and most of the food was taken care of and included in the cost.

The shortest distance for an E2E is 874 miles along the drag strips of the A30, A38, A6, A9 etc. - not a lot of fun. We tried it for a bit between Dingwall and Invergordon so that I could get my bike fixed but it was desperate. I'll return to the mechanical problems later. Back to the plot. The tour promised a scenic route of about 1150 miles, which sounded suspiciously hilly to me so I decided to record the climb using an altimeter (I hear cries of "kit buff" in the distance). Well I did. And it was hilly. Some of my companions sneered when I suggested that we would top Everest.

The two punishing first days-traversing Cornwall and Devon, ending at Bellever Youth Hostel on Dartmoor changed their minds. A total of 2835 metres (9302 feet) were climbed in those two days, the long climb from Yelverton to Princetown proving to be very hard work. Everest is 8847 metres-we topped that on the way to Kendal from Slaidburn. We passed it again on the last day from Tongue to JOG. The total ascent was 18385 metres (60321 feet)-that's two Everests or Everest, Kilimanjiri and Fuji stacked one on the other! Personally I think this is pretty good for an old man considering that we carried all our own kit on the bikes.

On the weather front, mostly it was very kind except for Devon and the Quantocks, where the heavens opened, and Oban to Glen Nevis where it was miserable and wet. Westerly winds blew on the days we were riding west, Glen Nevis to Mallaig and Carbisdale Castle to Durness. The winds were too bad for the ferry to the Cape Wrath road so that trip will have to wait for another day.

The anecdotes are endless, too many to record here. On a scenic trip avoiding as many main roads as possible and taking in Dartmoor, Cheddar Gorge, the Severn Bridge, the Forest of Dean and the Welsh Borders, Slaidburn and the Cross of Greet, Shap, Galloway, two nights on Arran, Skye and then coast to coast twice before reaching JOG; we were bound to have some tales and climb a few hills. The Tale of the Bottom Bracket is probably the most interesting and most boring, depending on how into bikes you are. My bike is essentially a thoroughbred Italian racer, not a tourer, and, the day before we set off I had to change the crankset from an old Shimano I had fitted, to a Campagnolo triple. Essentially most

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of the kit on the bike was Campagnolo (including the bottom bracket). This bit of equipment, which essentially is the axle the pedals and cranks are attached to, is prone to unscrewing itself if it is the Italian version. This is technical stuff, I know, the important bit is that it tried to part company with the bike after about 950 miles. I found that I couldn't engage the large chainring. After fiddling with it at Strathpeffer I eventually found an amazing gentleman in Invergordon who had the tool and knowledge to fix it. Without Ken Ross I would have been stuffed. After that the bike ran like a dream and the ride through Sutherland and Caithness was wonderful.

For the statistically minded, I consumed (at least) 22 pounds of "Wine Gums" (these enable one to ascend with gusto!), lots of "all day breakfasts, gallons of tea (I stopped drinking coffee because I couldn't keep up with my team members, Roy and Martin after coffee), enormous quantities of cake and vast numbers of large gin and tonics (isotonic - no pun intended - therefore felt OK in the morning). I spent 98 hours in the saddle for an average time of almost 5 hours per day. Average speed was 12.6 mph; average distance was just short of 60 miles per day. The longest was Chester to Slaidburn at 92 miles and the shortest was Durmess to Tongue at 29 miles. The highest point reached was Dartmoor at 510 metres and the second day (to Bellever YH on Dartmoor) had the most ascent - 1490 metres.

For the kit buffs I rode an Ellis Briggs Favori (Columbus tubing) with a 52/42/32 Campagnolo triple and 14-28 7-speed block. Wheels were Campagnolo hubs with DT spokes, Mavic rims and Continental top touring 2000 tyres (size 28). I had no punctures and didn't even have to inflate the tyres once.

And the best day? I think all of them. Friends met us on route and rode a little with us, Alan Lovett, Jon Carberry and Tim Watkins at Tockholes and Martin Stone and Debbie Thompson at Shap I made some new friends, met some interesting people and learned a lot about cycling. I became very fit and lost about a stone in weight.

I have also raised about £650 for my nominated charity CLIC - Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood - in memory of my cousin Ian, who was died of Leukaemia in his early adulthood. If anyone feels moved to contribute or raise funds, please contact me on 01772 700327 or Eveie Johnstone at CLIC 0131 662 9643. My thanks go to the CTC and Colin for organising the trip, to all my fellow End to Enders, and to my friends Roy and Martin who made the ride truly memorable. Lastly, I have to thank my wife, Sue, for the three week "Exit Visa". Thanks Sue. I could even be tempted again. Anyone out there fancy a little bike ride?

CLIC is a Registered Charity No. 802396

An anglo-hispanic expedition to the South Fylde Region

by Clive Bell

The expedition rallied at the Birley, a south Fylde tribal meeting place. The initial problem of reverse parking between the white lines of an empty car park was soon overcome and the travellers set course for the unknown lands beyond the pub car park sign. It was a much diminished force compared to that of previous expeditions, it could only be assumed that the storms of that day had claimed the souls of the other expected travellers.

The hot and humid conditions seemed to be to the liking of the Iberian contingent but wearied those from the more northern climes. Our route took us past Riggby's Restaurant and its tantalising odours (or there would have been had it been open). On we went down the trail eventually passing Warton Hall, it was at this point that 1/3rd of the party, who had been suffering for some time from an overloaded urinary tract, sought relief behind the sparse cover at this point (exciting stuff this!). Not 100 yds beyond this point we met the untameable A584, at risk of life and limb a crossing had to be made or the whole expedition would have ended in failure. At last with the roaring torrent behind them the party ascended the north embankment of the Ribble, arguably the highest point in South Fylde.

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Across the vast areas of untamed marsh-land which stretched before us, set by the Ribble, Southport could be seen, with the far distant Welsh mountains melting in the setting sun giving majesty to the scene before us (well it would have been if it was not for the mist, crap and gloom that surrounded us). The leader explained that this area was a haven for wildlife with Mallard, Teal, Canada geese and the occasional Heron fishing in the shallow pools disturbed only by the local cattle grazing on the north Ribble plains, and today – Nowt !!

Further into the journey whilst traversing swamp land a strange machine was found, previously unknown to civilisation, dispensing food to the local duck population and summoning the hundreds of duck diners with bleeping sounds. Little did the poor little buggers know that payback time would come from the muzzle of the guns of the local hunters (no such thing as a free lunch).

On then to the first outpost of human habitation and a phone to arrange where and when to rendezvous with the recovery vehicle, this would be the Birley for much merriment and drinking (two pints and off home !). The expedition was over and back to the humdrum of every day life.

PS.

If two frail females and a knackered old fart could manage this exciting adventure of a lifetime, where was everyone else ?

A P. Lee for Sanity or The Language Barrier

by Martin Bennett

I'd always thought of Phil as a dependable climbing partner. A climber to be relied upon. Solid in a crisis. Unlikely to do the unexpected. That's why I was so happy to be going with him on my much dreamed about trip to Colorado. How wrong can you be? This account of the route that proved the exception to the rule might also be worth recounting for the amusement added by our being on the crag next to a team of typical modern 'extreme sport' dudes. Their lingo caused us considerable merriment and mirth in any event.

We'd met guys like these a couple of days before. Wielding at least six Camalot 5's and 'Big Bro's' they were attacking a horrific off width on The Twin Owls. After succeeding they followed us to another area of the crag. They caught up with us as Phil led the crux fist crack of 'Yosemite' and grinned manically at his discomfort. "Have you done Rooster Tail, dooods?" they enquired. We had. Their first and only question was not how hard is it? Or how good is it? Or how well protected is it? But "How WIDE is it?" They expressed disappointment on being told it was only fist wide. These guys were serial masochists.

Now we'd sought out what the guide book describes as the best route on the best crag on Lumpy Ridge: 'J Crack' (5.10a) on a crag that announces itself as The Book. The guys were already a pitch up the adjacent 'Femp' (5.9) but had come here to do 'J Crack' so were quite interested in our progress. Their nineties West Coast lingo had us shaking with laughter on the 1st pitch and stance. You've heard Fenna, Evans et al 'doing' American climbers. 'Til now I'd thought they made it all up, but these guys almost parodied themselves.

I led the 2nd pitch, the J crack itself, a brilliant 150 foot off vertical finger crack – jams and finger locks not always quite perfect but runners that sink into the granite. Phil led through up the continuation crack for 40 feet or so to a headwall where the route sneaks off right along a traverse that's graded 5.10a R. This sounds OK 'til you realise that the R stands for run out! The last runner is at head height in the crack and the traverse is 25 feet 1—o—n--g! Still, a leader thinks, maybe the first move is the hard one. (As a second I thought "I bloody hope not"!).

At this point Phil came into the view of the 'way gnarly dudes' on 'Femp'. Having pumped us for info on the J crack pitch they now watched with rapt attention as Phil, moving ever further from his runner, inched his way along the traverse. And now the bad news – it's steady 5.8/5.9 for 20 feet. The sequence that merits 5.10 is as far as you can get from that runner!

I hung on my belays and listened. I could see Phil but not the dudes.

"How's it going doood?"

"OK."

"Is it thin maaan?"

☐ "Yeah. A bit."

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"You gonna make it doood?"

"I think so."

"Goood jaaaab"

Big mistake that last reply, Phil. There's a route in the Lakes called 'Hubris'. I looked it up. Has something to do with pride going before a fall.

Moments later, as he reached for the salvation of the crack that would bring the first hold for 25 feet, easier climbing and, most longed for of all, a runner, Phil's back foot shot off the polished granite. It was closely followed by the other foot, both hands and the rest of his body. I was lifted off my foothold (not very far – Phil's about the weight of two yards of tap water) as he began to run diagonally down the slab above me. I thought he was going to make it, to stay on his feet as he executed this beautiful parabola, this 'arc of a diver'. But the acceleration got the better of him and he did several twirls sliding over the rough granite before coming to rest at the nadir of his erstwhile arc. (We noticed later that the scratches thus created, in conjunction with the myriad 'skeeter' bites he'd picked up in the Wind Rivers a few days earlier made a fair facsimile of the Stars and Stripes across his back! Very patriotic, considering our location).

"Whoa, doood, that was real spectacular, maaan – you OK?"

"Yeah, I'll try again."

"No kidding? You're a hero doood. Way-to-go"

This time Phil (thought he) had an ace up his sleeve. Part way across this fascinating traverse, which had him transfixed like the eye of a snake, he paused and seemingly did the impossible. As he moved right again I could see he'd contrived a runner, at least the second rope was clipped into something. Voice from off-stage right :

"What's that pro doood?"

"A sky-hook." Momentary silence then :

"A sky-hook?! That's hilarious doood!"

And so it proved to be. Way before Phil had regained the crux his cherished secret weapon gave up the uneven struggle to stick to the rock and thereby act as his saviour and came tumbling and tinkling down the rock and rope 'til it came to rest upon his next runner 30 feet below. To cut the rest short Phil found his way by hook and by crook and a fair share of deviousness onto the stance above. I followed. As I completed the 40 feet of steep crack climbing and emerged onto the slab I hove into view of the Marx Brothers. "Whoa!" they said "You're the catcher of the day, doood." Their best line yet.

As we completed the 400 feet of quality climbing we began to consider the best way off the crag, the guide book being somewhat reticent on this point. We thought of asking the dudes but they pre-empted us, clearly having no idea themselves, by asking "Hey dooods, do you know a coool exit?" They then got involved in a nasty looking cave with an even nastier (and very uncool) looking 'exit' while we opted for a final 180 foot pitch up a 5.5 chimney.

We met Harpo, Chico and Groucho at the bottom. They proved to be quite ordinary geezers. Apart from the peculiar time consuming drawl that was the nearest they could get to English, that is. They asked us about what we'd done so far in the good 'ole US of A. They seemed genuinely interested too, to such an extent that their parting shot was "Thaanks for taarking to us, dooods, we wuz reeeal glaad to hear all that good stuurf"

I hope you were too.

Footnote : Of relevance on the language front was a remark made to me by an American girl I chatted to near a col you come over on the way back to the Cirque of the Towers from some of the routes in The Wind Rivers Range. She and her partner and Phil and I had approached this col from opposite directions at the same time. As we descended from it I got talking to her. After a bit she said "You're English is very good, where are you from?" A bit puzzled I said "England". "Oh" she says, "Well, what was that language you were speaking back there?!"

What she referred to of course was 'nobs-speak'. Phil and me, unroped, had separated and picked different routes to the col. In order to re-establish one another's whereabouts a long distance conversation had ensued :

"Whooooooooo-ooo"

"Whooooooooo-ooo"

"Whur ar ya nob?"
 "Am oop eer nob"
 "Whur's that nob?"
 "Oop on't col nob. Whur er yoo?"
 "Down eer nob"
 "Ow far nob?"
 "a cupple 'undred feet nob"
 "Shall a cum down?"
 "Naah, I'll cum oop"
 "Reet nob"
 "Reet"
 "See ya in a minnit nob"
 "Reet nob"
 "Whooooooooo-ooo"
 "Whooooooooo-ooo"

So what was her problem?

Postcard to Robin

by Martin Bennett

One of an occasional series, the origin of which is long forgotten.

We'd planned three weeks in Colorado.
 The first port of call was Eldorado.
 The 'Yellow Spur' was climbed by Kor
 And proved so good we wanted more.
 So after beers in Boulder we went back –
 Did the five seven classic 'Bastille Crack'.
 Not a bad first day whilst we were jet lagging
 We'd climbed til dark with no sign of flagging.
 Next day we went up Boulder Canyon
 Hoping rain would wait and hang on.
 On Castle Rock our hopes were shattered
 As thunder lightening and rain were spattered.
 We abbed off soaked – You couldn't have
 blamed us;
 In five mins the Brewery in Nederland claimed
 us!
 A parking fine cost us a packet –
 Ne-er mind 'cos Boulder – ye cannae whack it!
 When there there's really nothin' finer
 Than to have yer breakfasts in 'Dot's Diner'.
 In two hours we climbed 'The First Flatiron' –
 A thousand feet of slabs a-lyin'.
 To South Platte River the team now goes
 To do 'Lost In Space' on the dome of Sheep's
 Nose.
 Then The Black Canyon Of The Gunnison.
 Is it impressive? You bet your money, son!
 Here we met and climbed with Tolley
 And the next two weeks were rather jolly.
 Our first route here was in name only 'Casual'

For halfway up we'd the storm that was usual.
 A rope of three on the eight pitch 'Leisure Climb'
 But we got to the rim in what seemed no time.
 Breakfast in Crawford was a bit of a shocker –
 It's the home of my hero from Sheffield-Joe
 Cocker!
 The Tolleys left Crawford in their jeep
 While Phil and I climbed at Unaweep.
 We'd a rest from climbing in Moab, Utah
 Off road in the desert in the Tolley's "ute" car.
 Then on to Wyoming just for a change
 To Cirque Of The Towers in Wind Rivers Range.
 Just to establish an Alpine aura
 We did the 'North East Face of Pingora'.
 Early next morning we leapt out of bed
 To do the fabled 'East Ridge Of Wolfs Head'.
 Via Snowy Range and Laramie just for a lark
 We made our way to Estes Park.
 On Lumpy ridge it's the canine's gonads.
 The first crack we climbed was the five nine
 'Conads'.
 'Yosemite' 'Cackle' and 'Rooster Tail'
 Three more five nine cracks to add to the tale.
 'Clown Time Is Over' is a great big roof
 But the gear and the buckets make it bombproof.
 We'd hoped to climb Long's or maybe Hallett;
 But storms stopped us painting from this palette.
 Another few routes then back to Boulder
 For more Kor routes before we got older.
 'Touch and Go' and 'Direct Anthill'
 Ended the innings for me and for Phil.

– If you think this is bad you should see
Robin's efforts!

OBITUARY

Glenn James Shirley 1949 – 1999

Glenn passed away at his home in Kirkham on November 8th 1999.

Glenn has been a dedicated and well known member of the FMC since the early 80's and during this time has taken an active part in the club both on and off the hill.

A keen and accomplished hill walker for many years, Glenn had completed all the Scottish Munro's and the Corbetts, as well as all of the Lakeland peaks.

Before "graduating" to the FMC Glenn was also a member of the Lytham St. Annes Rambling Club during the 70's and 80's.

Having shared many happy times on the hills over the past ten years with Glenn, mostly in Scotland on Munro trips, he will be sadly missed.

Sadly, Glenn leaves his 10 year old son, Nicholas. However, over recent years Glenn made every effort to instill in Nicholas his love of the outdoors. They shared many happy times together, particularly at the F.M.C. hut at Stair and, of course, at the 'Swinny' public house!. Nicholas hopes to continue enjoying the Lakes, and with the help of friends he should have no problem doing so until he is old enough to join the FMC as a member.

The memorial service was held on Tuesday November 16th at St. Pauls Parish Church, Warton. Glenn's mother and family were comforted by the large number of family, friends and work colleagues who attended the service to pay their respects.

Goodbye Glenn, old friend, rest in peace.

--oOo--

Glenn's family requested that donations in Glenn's memory should go to the World Wildlife Fund UK, Panda House, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1BR.

Friends of Glenn from the Fylde are planning on collecting for a long lasting memorial to his memory.

This will be in the form of a Bench, Gate or Stile, through the National Trust, in Glenn's beloved Lake District, possibly in the Stair/Newlands Valley area.

If you would like to take part in this please contact Jon Trevorrow (tel:01253-739116) or Pete Seddon (tel:01253-406001).

John Cushnie, Pete Seddon & Jon Trevorrow

