



Fylde Mountaineering Club

Founded in 1950

NEWSLETTER

March 2004

What's in this Newsletter?

Let's see.....

Letters and Editorial on Page 2

Committee blurb and Summer Evening Walks
on Page 3

Meet reports and Advertisements on Pages 4, 5
and 10

Gripping tales of "derring do" from Adrian Clif-
ford and the "Old Gits" Tolley and Fenna on
Pages 6 and 7

Editor's Bit

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2004. Hopefully the new syllabus will be hiding in the envelope so if you have binned it already and didn't find the syllabus, tough!

John Wiseman has made a plea for volunteers to lead on the Summer Walks. These are top fun and come close to the boozy bike rides for entertainment. They're less dangerous, though; falling over is usually less traumatic than falling off!

Only two pictures this time but classy all the same. I've been playing around with images in Adobe Photoshop but find the software cumbersome, so have had a tryout with Paint Shop Pro 8, a better product it would seem. There'll be less or no fancy graphics dotted about, this increases the file size and the printer takes yonks. This was OK when I printed one to get photocopied at Office World, but the reproduction of the images was very poor and we were after higher quality.

Also included is a flyer for the BMC, urging us to become full members. It's up to you to decide whether you take up the offer. I don't propose to print these off each year. In future I'll include a little piece with the contact details. It's too time consuming printing, folding and stuffing the envelopes with extra bits, although I don't mind for the photographs, of course.

Please notify me of any errors or omissions. My mind is elsewhere on looking after 3400 orienteers over four days at Easter!

Barbara Senior sent me an open letter to club members to be published in the last newsletter. My chronic forgetfulness kicked in and I missed it out. I make my sincere apologies to Barbara in public this time and include the letter.

Gerry L Senior

With my children Jayne and David, I wish to thank most sincerely, all FMC members who gave their support during the last few months of Gerry's life and in other different ways, during his long membership of the FMC. We were most touched by the number of people who came to help celebrate Gerry's life at his funeral earlier this year. If we did not manage to talk to you all, please forgive us but you might remember the overwhelming number of people who came to pay respects on that day.

We would like to thank, particularly, Peter Roscoe, for his very thoughtful obituary that appeared in the FMC newsletter in June. I remain a member of the club and, although not very active, welcome the newsletter to read about what is happening and members' exploits. Jayne and David have, in the past, taken part in Club events and have always been interested (mainly through Gerry) to hear about it and the members.

They, with me, hope you will accept our best wishes for the future of the FMC and you as its members.

Barbara Senior
September 2003

EVENING WALKS 2003 and this year's programme

Last year there was a full programme of evening walks, which were circulated to all members. Each walk had its own distinctive character formed by the terrain, the weather and who was on the walk. On most there was much hilarity and chat, leaders had to watch those chatting in case they carried straight on when the leader turned. Some good pubs were visited, so good that it was not unknown for some to spend an hour or two in the pub "waiting for you to arrive" I got people sort of lost in farmers fields round Wheelton, Peter Llwellyn took us for a delightful walk that included "thrutching" through a cave and climbing a rock wall, all good fun. Clive Bell led us into wet mud round the back of War-ton, and nearly lost the Ladies.

So it is now springtime in 2004, time for people to volunteer to lead an evening walk, to think of places we can boldly go where no FMC walk has gone before, or an old favourite you would like to revisit. They are timed so people who work can get to the start in time!

Also can I sound out opinions? As there are a number of more mature, retired, members would anyone be interested in an all day walk during the week, or even a couple of days midweek in our own huts or those in Wales where we have reciprocal rights?

I look forward to lots of suggestions by phone, letter or email.

John Wiseman

Contact details on the back cover

Some more bits of admin stuff before the meet reports:

Lost Property

Andy Dunhill has the following items which have been left at the Stair Hut. He's not too sure what to do with them as he is a size 12. Size 10 members are thin on the ground these days in FMC and I'm sure Andy doesn't want to hang on to them forever. If they are not claimed they could be passed on to a charity shop of the committee's choice, given away as prizes at the Fell Race or auctioned off (although a "smelly helly" might not attract too much bidding!). If you've lost any of these garments or know whose they are, please get in touch with Andy. Details on the back cover.

- Tog 24 lifa type top dark blue with red cuffs & neck
- Regatta thin fleece light blue UK 10
- Crag Hopper cord trousers blue/grey UK 10

WARNING NOTICE

It has come to the notice of the committee that pirate versions of the FMC T shirt are being offered for sale on the internet. These items are of a very low quality, are shoddily made, and rapidly fall apart. They are apparently being made in Far Eastern sweatshops by such allegedly down market names as Lacrosse, Vivienne Westwood, and Armani. The 'official' FMC T-shirt is however now available in next year's colour of 'Arctic Fox'. This can only be obtained from an official FMC supplier, or in an emergency, by ringing Mike on 01772 632579.

LADIES MEET WEEKEND DECEMBER 13/14 2003 (STAIR)

ENTITLED " APART FROM EATING WE ALSO MOVED ABOUT A BIT"

On Saturday a group walked from Stair "in the wind and rain" to Keswick via Hawes End and Portinscale and along the dismantled railway track to Brunholme and Forge Brow, to return in even heavier rain.

We then indulged in the "Christmas meet eating spectacular", successfully orchestrated by Pat Bennett – a meal of numerous courses. The eating orgy was well paced and lasted for hours. The next day we topped Blencathra via Scales Fell "in the wind and the rain"

- The weather was consistent
- The company was excellent
- The carol singing was harmonious
- The Quiz was brain numbing (I only got two right)

Jennie Tolley

Llagangarbh 2004

Unable to book Glencoe for February this year we had to settle for March 13-14. A busy week for me on the telephone prior to the weekend, fortunately two non club members filled the vacant places and we only had to pay for one unfilled place.

Saturday was fine, routes were climbed on Stob Coire nan Lochan and on the Ben. Unfortunately Chris this got injured and had to retreat

from 0.5. The walkers had a enjoyable ascent of Ben Starav a repeat of a mass ascent we had a few years ago.

A good night in the Clachaig for the majority; unfortunately a mix up saw three people go to the Kingshouse.

Due to the wet conditions on Sunday walking was the order of the day but some did go home.

February is booked for 2005 lets hope the Glen has some snow and ice which has been sadly missing for a few years.

LES WARD

Boots for Sale

DB Pillar Boots (a Lakeland company but boots made in Italy)
Size 43 (I think)

Worn on one weekend only
Just too tight for purchaser
Cost £95

Will accept £35 ono

Tel **Dave Bibby** 01253 824137

Tel **Dave Earle** 01253 890283

For Sale

Turbo Shower
Plugs into car's cigar lighter socket.
Attach shower head to any flat surface by means of a suction cup,
drop the pump into a bucket of warm water and you've got a great shower.

New and boxed £27

Scarpa plastic boots Size 6/6½ £50

Contact **Libby Hacking**
01254 63645

FMC FELL RACE AND CURRY MEET 2003

An excellent turn out of 19 competitors took part in this year's festival of speed. Hal Rzakiewicz won the handicap race in a personal best time of 55.24, followed in by Viv Broughton also with a PB. Third was Delphine Stockton, a first timer at the gentle art of persuading the handicapper that you can barely move, let alone race. Dave Ward posted this year's fastest time; his 32.53 was outside the record (31.16) set by Ali Walsh last year, but was a superb effort given the lack of close competition. Viv was fastest of the women with 47.32, the effort she put into the race became obvious over the next few days as she creaked, stiff legged around the house. Several members turned up to walk the course non-

competitively and indulge in a spot of heckling. These are mainly past winners who, having conned the handicapper to achieve their win see no reason to give him the opportunity to get his own back. (You know who you are Tolleys and Penn) The seriousness with which some members are now taking this race is illustrated by the fact that Phil Lee rushed off to Keswick on Saturday morning to buy a pair of Walsh fell running shoes. He ran one minute faster than last year so I suppose it counts as a good investment! Thanks to everyone who raced, heckled or helped on the day and to Andy and Christine for the most enjoyable curry on Saturday night.

Mark Broughton

Position		Time		Scratch position
1	Hal Rzakiewicz	55.24	PB	8
2	Vivienne Broughton	47.32	PB	6
3	Delphine Stockton	57.02		12
4	Clive Bell	62.53	PB	17
5	Martin Dale	51.34		9
6	Phil Lee	37.33		3
7	Andy Dunhill	41.02	PB	4
8	Chris Thistlethwaite	35.09		2
9	Diane Lord	60.15		14
10	John Stockton	60.21		15
11	Dave Ward	32.53		1
12	Sue Denmark	61.07		16
13	Mark Broughton	42.07		5
14	John Denmark	49.27		7
15	Les Ward	53.41		11
16	Dave Earle	57.04		13
17	Dave Wood	53.13		10
18	Roy Nisbett	71.14	PB	18
19	Geoff Bellingham	92.04		19

West Gully Tunnel Route 45m IV Black Crag Ennerdale (First Ascent)

Having heard rumours of various secret crags I thought I would find my own so scanned the OS maps and the guidebooks looking for high crags with no winter routes or very few. Black Crag seemed to fit the bill and lead to Cave route IV but unroped first ascents didn't fit my long-term survival plans so I roped in my old mate Chris "Take In Quick" Thistlethwaite.

Chris and I have climbed together over 23yrs and have in recent years gained a little notoriety in Fylde circles for long drawn out ascents of Grade V ice routes in Scotland. A 2am finish after South Post Direct on Meagaidh was only bettered by a 4am one after Zero Gully on the Ben! During the latter climb we witnessed the aftermath of a cornice collapse on point five, which killed one climber and fractured the pelvis of his companion. So slow but safe is our motto, with the emphasis on slow, but I have speeded up since I moved to the Lakes though Chris as yet isn't quite ready for Grade IV/V leading.

Needless to say we decided a fairly early start was appropriate, especially as the forecast was for a thaw later. It was quite exciting to be walking in to an undeveloped crag to do what looked like a classic first ascent, the line being one that I had backed off on during my solitary explorations. Mixed climbing was the name of the game with rock cracks and frozen moss being the

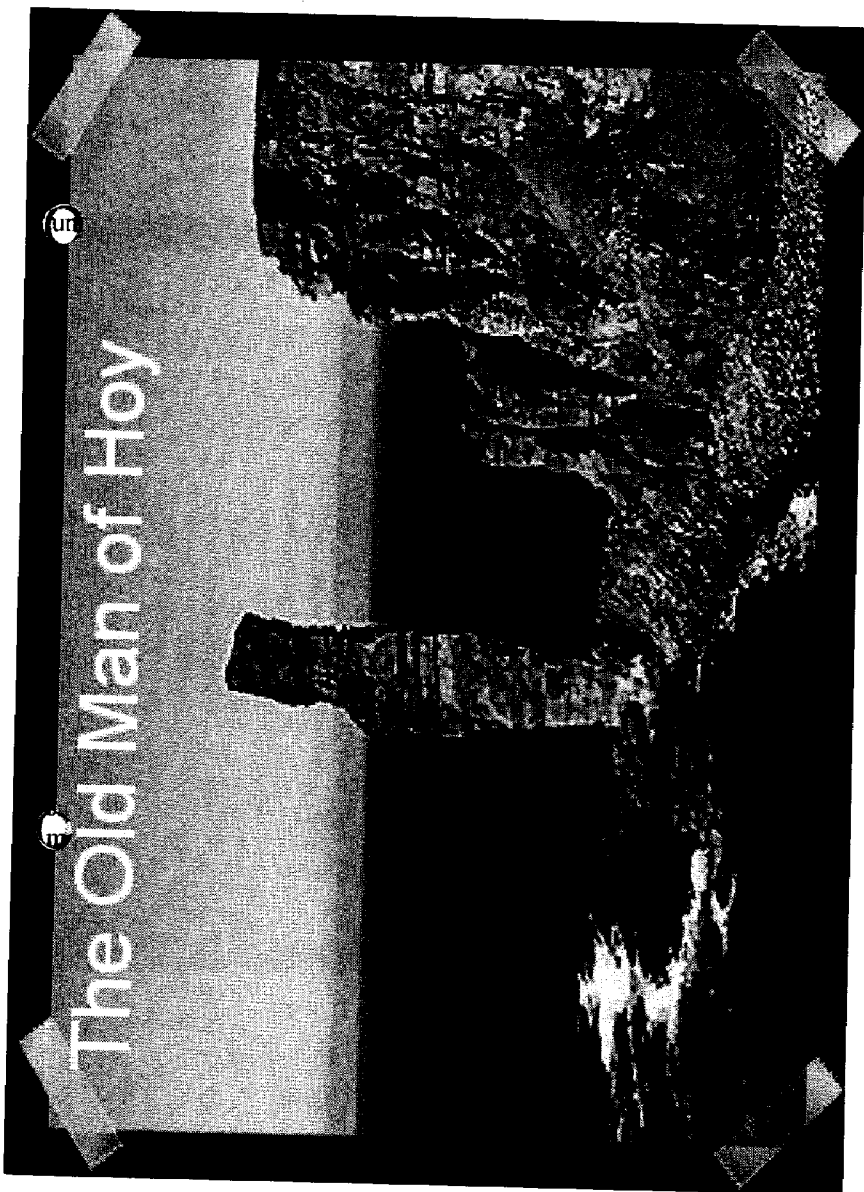
key.

Anyway we climbed the route and were home before dark (for a change).

Adrian Clifford

The rather fine picture of Chris This battling his way up this route.





An Old Man visits a relative on Hoy

In July I found I had a few days holiday spare and called Mike Tolley to see if he fancied a long weekend motor biking somewhere like the Outer Hebrides. He said "NO! Let's go to Orkney and do The Old Man of Hoy". What a totally awesome idea – too far to go on a boring car journey – but ideal to go and burn up some Scottish roads on two wheels.

Of course as soon as we named a date then the weather fell apart, which was not good as I was so excited I couldn't stand still – but we delayed 3 days then I took a Friday pm off work and off we went up the M6. Mike had shown up with a surprise of course – his bike needed a new tyre and chain and and and ... so he did a "Tolley" and traded in the old the bike for a new Red Fast one. This ensured an even bigger grin than necessitated by simply the prospect of the sea stack and 1,000 miles of biking round Scotland trying to keep up with a hot CBR.

Travel North

Well, we simply sat on the motorways to Perth – carving thru miles of standing traffic – then the speedy OAP latched onto a lone biker at Dunkeld and zooooomed off – he is such a tart.

I caught him up at Aviemore (WOW – Drumochter pass at high speed) where we had tea in what was the Happy Haggis, then off north again. Mid evening saw us somewhere I can't remember the name of, 25 miles north of Inverness. We stopped

'cos we were tired, and 'cos Tolley ran out of fuel (unbelievably we had an emergency bottle) and I cleverly spotted a bunkhouse. Luckily they sold beer nearby.

In the morning we headed off to Wick – up the wrong road – but it was a great road, then up the coast – sun and bends and warm tarmac and stunning scenery. I enjoyed this bit a lot.

A quality bacon bun and shite coffee in Wick, then off to Dead O' Groats and the ferry to Orkney.

Orkney & Hoy

Aren't ferries a pain in the bum? They're either early or late. We spent lunchtime onwards piddling about getting to Orkney then blasted across Orkney to get to the vehicle ferry to Hoy – we missed the last one by 10 minutes. Ugh! We hurried so much that Tolley didn't even bow his head to the Highland Park Distillery as we passed it – I was worried by that.

Orkney is beautiful – very. It's flat, all coastline and very friendly. I felt it was like Cornwall in Scotland. I was even more impressed when we got to Stromness – which has a great paved winding high street and a pleasant bohemian atmosphere. We found the fine municipal camp site and went for supplies for Hoy, food and beer. We were quite restrained on beer consumption (and at £2,000 a pint you have to be) and went back to the tent early. It was when Tol suggested we had an extra ½ bottle of Malt that things went downhill. That boy is a lush. But we

had a good laugh talking to a guy from Zimbabwe and his Kiwi girlfriend – he had come to Orkney to find work as a plumber. Odd that? And he had no taste in motorbikes – he thought Mike's red Fire Storm was better than my CBR.

As you can see, we weren't enjoying ourselves at all.

We got the first ferry to Hoy in the morning with fairly fuzzy heads. Scapa Flow is truly bootiful too. On Hoy we'd been told to go to the Café in the war museum by the ferry. Good bacon butties and brews served by this kinda odd couple from London. I reckon the woman was there 'cos her calling in life was really to run a NAAFI and say things like "Just been dive bombed by Stukas deerie? Never mind have a cuppa". Hoy has some hills maybe 1,500' high and is thus very different to flat Orkney. We drove the 10 miles to Rackwick Bay where one is based for the climb. What is Rackwick Bay like? My advice is simply GO THERE.

There is a good bothy by the beach – we took the bikes down 400yds of grass track and over a 3 plank bridge to get to it (more of "The Bridge" later). A guy camping there with his family told us he'd done the route in June and it was 10-12 hours round trip from the bothy and it was 11 am. WOT? Obviously he'd not sussed he was dealing with pro's.

We got sorted out and walked along the 2 miles of cliff to the stack in the sun. It rears up above the huge cliff tops and is stunning and intimidating

– even on a settled sunny day. As we approached I got a text message off Steve Wrigley "Sighted the Old Man yet?".

Aha! My chance.

"Yes – he's here – and we can see a big sea stack too!"
What wit.

The Climb

You scramble down 350' of steep vegetated semi-cliff to get to the red/brown stack. You don't have to swim to it. The pillar is steep and slim and looks a bit falling apart. I thought "hmmmm!"

The E2 route that Haston nailed up the east face above you is horrifying. There are 5 pitches – only 1 hard. The route is now E1 5b – about right. I led all the route, Mike encouraged in the best style and sorted out the abseiling – worked well that way.

Pitch 1 is an easy 80' introduction – and very welcome for getting your act together.

Pitch 2 is where it's at. First-down on rounded gritty holds. Then across-on rounded gritty holds. Then you are below the crack that goes up and out. The crux is supposed to be getting through the first bulge. Rot. That bit's ok-the real issue is getting out of a chimney and getting established in the wide crack above.

At this point I would like to formally register my appreciation to:

- Chris Bonington for putting the wooden wedges in the crack
- Ray Jardine for inventing big camming device
- The shop that sold them to me

- Mike Sissons and Martin Bennett for lending us extra ones

This move is horrible. Out on an overhang, 30 round the corner from your second, 150'+ above the sea; an off-width thutch. I have no problem is saying in public that I used the sling to turn around; it was not a place I wanted to fall off. Probably looked impressive to the cliff top observers!

But with that done it's bridge off up the crack to the belay (what Tom Patey is doing shagging the crack in Hard Rock I do not know) then enjoy your second fighting up the same ground.

Pitches 3 and 4 are easier – but lack gear and have Fulmar chicks for entertainment. Popping your head above a ledge, 50' above your gear, to see a Fulmar pile of fluff clearing its throat is when you wish Mike was leading.

I'd been told Pitch 5 was the canine kahuna's – and it is. But it's just not long enough. An excellent steep open book corner right up to the top. The Old Man reveals itself to be two separate pillars touching at the corners here – as you get higher, wind then light comes thru' both the right and left hand cracks – increasingly precarious. I'm sure I could feel the crack widen as I leaned back on holds.

The top of the stack is loose rocks and dusty – there were a few walkers on the cliff top to witness the historic summit moment (lucky people) then I went back down to the ab point 5'

below and brought the boy up. He seemed pretty happy to be there – I certainly was.

Then Down ... all the way to Lanchashire

5 abseils. Mike sorted this most professionally – even using advanced vomit provoking techniques to empty the Fulmars guts before you got close. I was glad Mike sorted the down bit – I was quite tired – it was intense leading the entire up bit.

All went well apart from Mike nearly going off into bandit territory on #3 – he lost his bearings and nearly missed the belay point.

It's recommended that you take a rope to leave on the 2nd pitch so that you can get in and across to the 1st belay. Luckily there was a good line in place so that was no issue. I was glad I had my shunt with me. We got down safely – we had a look at the impressive seaward face of the Old Man – route possibilities here – but only for the insane - then bagged up and struggled up the cliff then home in the sun. Happy bunnies. 6 hours bothy to bothy.

We were very thirsty and had endless brews, had a walk on the fabulous beach (didn't hold hands tho'), had a wash, food, a beer and some malt – and watched the antics of a crazed Yank who was dossing in the bothy too. Raving. There was a good feeling of having done a great trip to a great place and feeling peacefully good about it.

It rained in the night and I woke up

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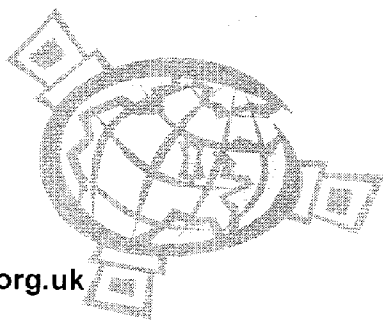
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and said "Bollocks – the plank bridge in the rain with the bikes". Mike was thinking the same – we didn't sleep well after that.

In the morning the midges came out insanely and made it an extra issue riding on the grass in the rain and getting over the planks. Mike did it OK of course, and against the odds I managed not to fall off either – Phew!

After that we just rode the bikes, got ferries, and rode some more. I felt quite sad leaving Orkney – I liked it a lot.

Back on the mainland, we rode to Kingussie in ever increasing temperatures. We killed a lot of very fat Scottish flies – it was disgusting. I was tired and found the riding an effort – Mike just kept on going and going.

Next day we sort of hoped to climb at Newtonmore – but in the end we didn't have the will. The trip was only

about the Old Man. So, we got on the bikes again and had a fantastic ride at speed to Perth (I love that A9), Edinburgh, then the ace road across to Moffat – with a very genteel tea shop on the way.

The M74 and M6 were boiling hot and tedious so we came off at Shap and did our final bit of ace road – the A6 to Kendal. Burned off a Porsche (oh how predictably lad behaviour). About 3:00 pm we got to my house at Kirby Lonsdale – almost exactly 4 days and 1,000 miles later. I was so buzzing that I didn't know what to do for about 3 hours – a swim in the Lune helped.

I'm glad Mike didn't say yes to going to the Outer Hebrides.

Simon Fenna

An eleventh hour addition!

CAIRNGORM MEET 14/15TH FEBRUARY 2004

Another good turnout with 13 making the trip to Kingussie. Scotland's freak summer heat wave continued, limiting our options, however ascents of Easy Gully (Creag Meagaidh), Hells Lum and a scramble up Afterthought Arête (Stag Rocks) got done,

as well as walking on Ben Macdhui, all in fine weather. Unfortunately, the beer was of the same quality as the ice.

Sunday saw plods up Creag Meagaidh and No2 Gully, and extreme shopping and hangover recovery in Fort William.

The next Cairngorm meet is in March '05, probably trying a different venue. Any ideas?

FMC Website www.fyldemc.org.uk