



# Fylde Mountaineering Club

Founded in 1950

NEWSLETTER

September 2004



**Reminiscences of childhood days spotting steam engines, aaah...  
For more details see Clive Bell's account of the Whitby meet**

## Club Jottings and information

It's the Chester Club's 51st Annual Dinner on Saturday the 2nd of October at Tyn-y-coed.  
Club members are invited to attend.

Chris Packman has been accepted as a full member by the Committee at the last meeting held on the 11th of August. Well done Chris, welcome to FMC.

Other snippets from the Committee are:

### Hot hut news

#### Stair

The new front door should be in place by the end of September.

Some trees need felling or trimming. This to be carried out at the next working weekend. 2/3 of October. All budding arborists are welcome!. Please contact Andy and Christine on 01434 628018.

### Socials

The dates for your diary are:

**6th October** Digital FMC Travels (Peru and Other Places)

**10th November** Photo Competition

**8th December** Bowland Mountain Rescue

12th January 2005

9th February

9th March

**The AGM** will be on Wednesday 23rd of February 2005.

Members are reminded that any resolutions or proposals should be with the Secretary, in writing, by the 31st December 2004.

Comments have been made that the socials have been a little haphazard in their starting time, making them less attractive to members who have a fair distance to travel.

It is proposed that members gather from 8pm for a PROMPT 8.30pm start to the proceedings.

All the above socials and the AGM will be at the usual venue, the Raikes, unless otherwise advised.

### Craig-y-Longridge

An appeal has been launched to Preserve this local crag for the climbing community and the Committee have pledged £200 on the Club's behalf. It is envisaged that a five figure sum will be involved.

### Cairngorm Meet 2005

A new venue is being sought. To find out more contact Chris Bell 01772 774072

### Lundy August 27/8 - 3/9 2005

We have the Barn booked & there are 14 places at approx. £80 plus the ferry.

A cheque secures a place. Contact Andy Dunhill on 01434 628018

### Orienteering Meet October 16/17

#### Stair

A new area to run on for members,

open fell top this time. Life is a little complex with our impending grandparent status occurring in early October and Sue has the West Lancashire Scout and Guide O Championships on the Sunday. All things being equal we should manage it OK, including a feed on the Saturday night. I don't think I have the time to organise any fancy electronic kit this year but the area has been used for championship events in the past and is a great venue for fine contour interpretation and fast running.

Contact me (John Denmark) on 01772 700327 or 07885 470619 so that we can organise the catering.

### No 1 Newhouses, Little Langdale

Anyone who has visited Little Langdale recently, may have noticed the "For Sale" signs for No. 1 Newhouses, and I apologise for not informing the members of the FMC before getting to this stage.

No.1 is jointly owned by my brother and sisters and myself, having been handed over by our parents, Jack and Dorothy Jowett in the early 1990s. I have been administering it as a holiday lettings business, as well as for the benefit of family use. Unfortunately, a combination of circumstances, including my deteriorating health, has led us to agree - reluctantly and with some sadness - that the time has come to part with it.

The sale is being handled by Hackney and Leigh, of Ambleside (015394

32800) who have valued it at £265,000. If any members are interested, I would be delighted to provide them with any further information, but would urge them to act quickly as we've already had an offer. It would be great if it could be kept in the FMC clan.

Margaret Scott  
Station House, Station Road  
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### Club Rules

A review of the rules is ongoing at present

The rules were drafted over 50 years ago and the committee have felt for some time now that a review was timely and necessary. After all, times change, and what was deemed acceptable in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in the period following WW2 may not be so acceptable at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Recent informal discussions have centred on the requirements of membership of FMC, with particular reference to the standards required. The relevant wording here is: "The required standard is that the applicant shall be a competent all-weather fell walker, or a competent rock climber to at least Very-Difficult standard." The club does not require applicants to "pass a test" but the wording of the present rules *could* imply that. In these days of a compensation culture, the Club,

its elected committee and meet leaders have to be aware of Health and Safety legislation especially that directed at outdoor pursuits. To this end and to aid in a potential re-writing of the rules the Club are seeking advice from the British Mountaineering Council.

Some recent incidents have flagged up a need for the Club and its members to ascertain where its and their responsibilities lie in relation to "organised" Club activities. The real

point of all this "spiel" is to encourage members to recognise their own limitations when embarking on any activity and to act accordingly. I, for one, like many other members of my gender, still feel very youthful inside, but sadly anno domini decrees that I can't do what I did thirty or forty years ago.

**John Denmark on behalf of the Committee**

## Alpine Guides - [www.alpine-guides.com](http://www.alpine-guides.com)

Mike Twid Turner, Rich Cross, Al Powell and John Morgan.

### **Colorado ice Desert rock road trip first two weeks of March.**

Climb the best ice in the states followed by a week climbing towers in the Desert. Finish at Red rocks.

We are looking for 2 folk to join 4 folk already of this fantastic adventure.

### **Manali India ski touring expedition. 3 weeks.**

Touring around unclimbed Peaks.

Powder guaranteed in an incredible setting.

### **La Grave ice climbing/coaching.**

6 day courses based from La Grave Frances premier ice venue.

Also available are combo weeks ice climbing/off piste skiing.

See our web site for details and prices.

## Meet reports from your Chairman (incapacitated).

On the Sunday of the recent Tremadoc meet, en route to the crag in the Rhinogs, the chairman stepped off a rock and into a hole and severely sprained his ankle. The chairman would like to take this opportunity to thank his rescuers, Martin Bennett, Andy Dunhill, Phil Lee, Chris Thistlethwaite, and Mick Tolley. I couldn't have been in the company of a better bunch of blokes.

Thanks chaps.

## Swanage, May Day Bank Holiday.

Due to a dodgy weather forecast, no one went to Swanage. Instead we took advantage of the Chester Hut and went to North Wales. Saturday we climbed at Gogarth. Rik Simpson got his baptism of fire with Kevin Stephens on Emulator. Kev, returning from injury, was taking it easy. Rik, on the other hand was learning how to jam/layback the hard way. Me and Steve Wrigley took Kevin's advice and headed for North Sack Wall, where it would be sheltered from the freezing wind and nice and sunny. Absolute bollocks! We shivered our way up South Sea Bubble and Talking Heads and then because we had run out of extra layers to put on sought solace from the chill down Wen Zawn where we enjoyed Concrete Chimney. Meanwhile, Chris Thistlethwaite and Adrian Clifford spent the day on Holyhead Mountain. Sunday was spent grappling with the horrors of the Grochan. First Amendment has a nice little problem start up a thin crack. Absolute bollocks! It was desperate!!! Steve lead the second pitch which was also a bit pokey. Meanwhile Rik was having another nightmare on Sickie. Doing an Alan Blackburn on the crux, if in doubt just jump off. Steve then lead Hangover which was the nicest route of the day. The next one proved to be the real horror story. Surplombs crux is low down, moving across a wall. This went ok.

It was the offwidths above that were wild. I thought mine was bad enough but Steve's top pitch was even worse. A full bore body pump and a very good lead by the man. Chris and Adrian mucked about round to the left on stuff like Phantom Rib.

Monday found us at Tremadoc. Me and Steve visited Craig Y Castell and did One Step In The Crowds before throwing ourselves at Pellagra. I fell off the first pitch after doing the moves past the peg free on the first attempt. The way I had the ropes rigged up it was like being in a baby's bouncing cradle. On subsequent attempts I couldn't repeat the moves past the peg. I eventually managed to pull round onto the stance but only after a couple more baby bouncing falls. The top pitch was filthy and repulsed Steve. I fared a bit better

finding a peg hiding beneath the veg but higher up I was faced with a thin crack choked with dandelions etc. I had to admit defeat. A good clean from above is definitely required. We finished up Wasp, no easy cop out. I must apologise to the others as I don't know what they got up to on the Monday.

### **Rhyd Ddu**

I was asked to lead this meet by Mr Tolley. Only Bill Clarke and Elaine Scarles accompanied me in the pub on the Friday night. A poor do. Saturday dawned wet. Bill and Elaine eventually went to Tremadoc. I went shopping and then went bouldering at Porth Ysgo which is down on the Lleyn Peninsula. I wont bore you with the details only to say that it is an awesome spot. The sun came out, it was deserted and I had a fantastic afternoon. I urge you to go and check it out.

Phil Lee turned up on Saturday night and we had a good night in the pub whose prices were a cause for concern the previous year. It seems that the rest of the country has caught up therefore the price of a pint didn't seem too bad.

Sunday, yes you guessed it, dawned wet. Bill and Elaine went for a walk. Me and Phil went to Phil's favourite shop, Gelert. It was still tipping it down when we'd done the bargain hunting and we very nearly gave up and headed for home but we didn't. The rain stopped just as we drove onto Eric's forecourt. Tremadoc was again to be our saviour. We warmed up on a route to the left of Craig Ddu Wall whose name escapes me. We then did Tensor. It was full of cobwebs and some grass and obviously hadn't been climbed regularly in the last few years. Whats happening to Tremadoc? Is it going out of favour? Dont put any weight on the top peg either. The eyes bust and bends alarmingly even under the weight of a quickdraw and the rope. Decent gear exists just below anyway.

Beer was had in the excellent Helter Skelter in Frodsham on the way home. Shame more people didn't turn up to sample a great hut.

**Martin Dale**

## **Northumberland Camping 11 - 12 September 2004**

This was a camping meet to sample the delights of the Northumberland sandstone outcrops but despite my many calls to members only Phil Lee & I were there from the FMC. Phil brought 4 others from the Peak Club in Sheffield so the meet went ahead.

We climbed all day both days. Although it was very windy rain never stopped play & the sun even shone for most of Sunday. We went to Back Bowden Doors, a crag notable for the extensive profusion of overhangs, on Saturday & the 3 climbing teams did around 20 routes altogether. Climbs done were mainly in the Severe to HVS grades which seemed to be hard enough for most. The most memorable for Phil was The Arches HVS which is a rising traverse sandwiched between two bands of overhangs. This is definitely easier for the short because the height between the two bands is short & it has to be climbed in a constricted style. The day ended with an ascent of Duke of York HVS, a very steep hand traverse across an overhanging wall. One of the Peak lads, Steve, kindly put most of the gear in but was too tired to finish it off so I did. It's amazing how much easier it is with all the difficult runners already there.

We camped on Saturday in Wooler in the foothills of the Cheviots on a reasonable campsite. Although it rained overnight Sunday dawned sunny but windy so we went to Kyloe Crag which has lots of very good quality middle grade climbs. This has a nice outlook towards the Cheviots although part of it is protected by trees which were useful to avoid the worst of the wind. A similar number of routes, & range of grades, were done here by the teams. All decided that several of the climbs were real classics, which they are. There were no epics or falls & everyone enjoyed the weekend. The general consensus was that the grades are bit stiff & all of us were tired by the end of the weekend.

There is lots of good walking in the area both in the Cheviots & along the coast. The area has some of the best coastline in the country with excellent views & good unspoilt & quiet beaches. I hope more people can make it next year.

**Andy Dunhill**

## COGNE 2004

As has become usual towards the end of January there was a very well attended ice climbing "meet" (though you wouldn't find it on the meets list) to Val di Cogne in the Aosta valley. The usual suspects turned up like bad pennies but in addition we had the pleasure of the company of Messrs Bell and Hird, making their inaugural foray onto the European frozen stuff. Adrian Clifford also joined us for the first time and frightened the life out of Alan Blackburn on some well chosen horrors. As well as a good number of members we had a liberal sprinkling of guests through various links with other clubs.

Thirteen was the lucky number in the advance party which was planned to leave a day ahead of the other four. It would have been sixteen but Woody and Dennis and his mate Paddy (well what else would he have been called?) had to cry off at the last moment – some injury sustained in the gym, Dennis would have us believe! The lucky thirteen were soon enjoying good sport in very cold conditions which seemed to make things a bit harder than you might expect, forcing you to contend with brittle ice and numb fingers. That was certainly my experience on the first route we did, which I thought to be a 100 foot grade 3 pitch but turned out to be almost twice that length and more like grade 4 – and I took only 6 ice screws!

Arriving back after our second day's climbing we eagerly awaited the arrival of the latecomers Fenna, Wrigley, Bell and Hird. All we got was a plethora of text messages – a snowed in Geneva airport meant they didn't leave that night nor the one after it. They'd been aboard the plane when the flight was aborted but had to go home. Some might have given up but not these guys. Back into work they went, rearranged their days off and eventually turned up raring to go! The youngsters (Bell and Hird) were "blooded" (in one case almost literally) by the "old guard" of Wrigley and Fenna on the classic ice of the Cascade d' Lillaz and great fun was had by all.

For the next few days the meet went according to plan. The highlights were twofold and the two events almost ran into one another. The first was the famous "Grappa Night", an impromptu session which might well become an annual event. It was all the fault of an over zealous bar proprietor who, to express his gratitude for our booking of a dozen or so meals at his restaurant, at the end of the meal offered us a "digestif". We of course couldn't accept quickly enough. We were ceremoniously issued with a "shot" glass apiece then an ENORMOUS carafe of grappa was set before us. I think the idea was that we should each take a glass and leave the rest. I ask you! Not until it was drained

did we leave that table. It didn't take long mind you. In what seemed like seconds a great deal of indecipherable jabbering was going on followed by much staggering when we hit the street. The normally cool and so in-control Wriggers measured his length in the snow at least once in the 100 metres or so between there and our apartments.

Now this was very good preparation for Steve and Phil, who's aspirations had had them dubbed "the A team". For next morning they were going onto the local test piece "Repentance Super", which consists of two sustained grade 6 pitches. Their day started ignominiously with a technicolour yawn in the car park before a blow had been struck, but finished in glory as despite all the (grappa induced) odds, our heroes were successful. Another victory for FMC fortitude in the face of alcoholic over indulgence verging on poisoning! And there have been many!

The trip then settled down again into the routine of climbing drinking eating drinking etc with rest days being taken keeping Martin company as he boarded most of the resorts within reach. Until the last day that is when Kevin popped up to provide the best entertainment of the trip. He and Phil were doing a multi pitch grade 4 climb and Chris and Andy were to follow them up the first pitch. In between was a pair of Dutch climbers. This much I realised as I caught up with them to hitch a ride on their rope, having had my plans dashed by melting ice half an hour earlier and having lost my partner (Mike) to a swollen foot and painful boots.

So we all did the first pitch, letting the Dutch go on ahead as they'd been a bit pissy about suddenly finding themselves behind a rope of three. I then ran out 60 metres of rope on easy ground and was preparing a belay when there was a yell from above and a fridge sized block of ice hurtled past me out in space. It hit the snowfield below me and broke into pieces that were merely very large before funnelling into the narrows where the boys were. "OK?" I shouted when the dust(?) had settled. The usual understatement was discerned from Phil: "No, I think we'd better go down". I descended to the stance to find Kevin had been clobbered about the shoulder and neck and was in great pain. There was a lot of blood too which we thought a bit worrying but he seemed assured was only a flesh wound and that it was his shoulder we had to worry about. We strapped it up as best we could and set about organising ourselves for the descent down the steep first pitch.

Kevin couldn't help himself very well so it was arranged that Phil would lower him whilst I abseiled alongside him with a sling round his harness to

pull him away from nasty rocky bits and assure his smooth, jerk free passage down the ice. Meanwhile Andy also abbed down beside us relaying messages via their "batphones" to Chris at the top station. It worked quite well and would have been even better if their two 60 m ropes hadn't been exactly the same colours as ours! Talk about a cluster\_\_k!

At the bottom Kev rallied a bit in the sunshine but then the shock seemed to creep in and it was clear that he wasn't going to walk home. Hooray we all (except Kevin) thought – we'll have to get the helicopter in, what fun! And so, with the help of some local guides with a mobile and the right phone number, we did. What a great photo opportunity. Thanks Kev.

After all the fun was over and Kev had been winched up and flown off into the blue we ascertained which hospital he'd be taken to and thought we'd better dash down the valley and get to the hospital in Aosta without delay. Then common sense took over and we decided it was a higher priority to take the young aspirant guide who'd helped us for a drink. This we did, then went for Kevin, wondering what his injuries were and whether he'd be coming home with us. It turned out to be a dislocated shoulder which was dealt with in a couple of hours so Kevin was discharged and, after a very uncomfortable night, able to travel with us the next day. And that was that.

Present at this "non-meet" were:

Members: Bennett, Dale, Fenna, Tolley, Wrigley, Bell, Hird, Blackburn, Clifford, Stevens, Lee.

Guests: Rhodes, Deakin, Andrews, Spurrirt, Alderson, Ryan.

We'll be doing it all (well most of it) again next year. I'm canvassing opinion – should it be Cogne yet again (for the comfort of knowing how to get there, where to stay and most of all that for 4 years in a row we've had good ice and weather) or somewhere else for a change? Kandersteg maybe? If you're interested in the trip let me know you're opinion at :

[martin@ben-nett.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:martin@ben-nett.freeserve.co.uk) Martin Bennett

## WONDERFUL WHITBY - June 04

A full team of eight bodies met on Friday afternoon in glorious sunshine at the Harbour Grange bunk house in Whitby. The lady owner and family had gone to Cambridge for their daughter's degree ceremony we were therefore the only group in the place; i.e. eight of us in a place with twenty four beds. An excellent place to doss, with all the usual amenities including a lounge with a tele, although we could not find a drying room. There were a few rules like not cooking after 9-30pm and a curfew of 11-30pm, after talking to the owner these seemed sensible and were not strictly enforced.

Friday evening we ventured through the old part of east cliff up the 199 steps through the old grave yard past the old church and the abbey to savour the wonderful view across the harbour to west cliff and beyond. Then back down the steps to beer in the Shambles then over the river to the Tap & Spile (used to be called the Cutty Sark in less trendy times) for more beer. A singer man with guitar entertained us as we supped. At first we sat quite close to the man and his speakers but moved away to reduce the decibels, except Nizzy, who removed both hearing aids and remained in his ring side seat.

Saturday morning arrived with iffy weather, off we went to the railway station to catch the first train of the day which arrived 20 minutes late! (apparently it was not allowed to go without its fire extinguisher, so one was borrowed from another train!!!). This late, noisy not too comfortable modern Arriva train took us to Grosmont where we caught the North Yorkshire Moors Railway preserved steam train to Goathland. This ancient train pulled by a 100 year old LNER J26 loco. was smooth comfortable, quiet, on time and just as fast as the last train and the fare was about the same. The engine carried the name plate 'Preston Rambler' I don't think it was in our honour.

We left the puffer at Goathland to start our wanderings back to Whitby. The pretty village of Goathland is the fictitious Aidensfield of the TV series Heartbeat, no filming today so our hopes of being 'discovered' were dashed. From here we visited the Mallyan spout waterfall then followed the river West Beck to the sleepy village of Beck Hole then over the rather bleak moors to the next waterfall, Falling Foss then past the Hermitage, a hermits cave hewn out of a large rock (don't know how, what, when or why). On to Littlebeck then Iburndale down a path, at the end of which, we passed a notice saying 'foot path closed', good job we were not going the other way then! In a field just passed Sleights I found a balloon which had come from Malton show, I've sent off the card and now await my £50 prize! After this excitement we carried on through Ruswarp and back to Whitby. All day the rain threatened but we never really

got wet.

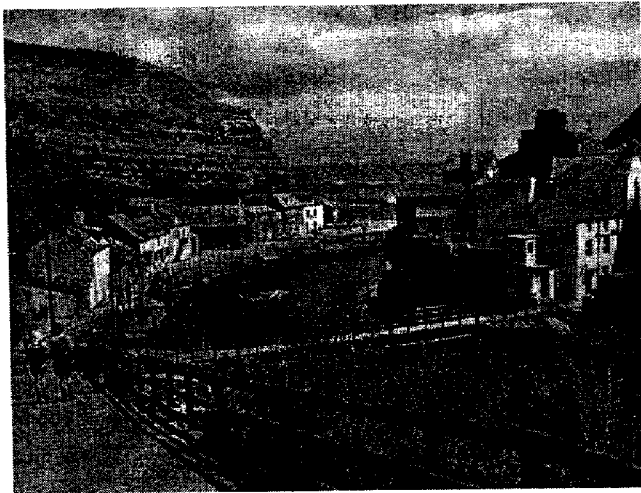
Saturday evening we dined on fish chips and mushy peas at a café near the river, then on to the Tap & Spile once again, no singer this time.



Sunday morning dawned with blue skies and sunshine. From the town bus station we took the Arriva bus (which was on time) to Easington (not the one with the colliery). From Easington we walked to Boulby cliff, the highest

in England and a beautiful view up and down the coast and out to sea. Below us was the remains of alum quarries, active until the mid 1800's. The alum was quarried and processed here. The process involved smouldering it in a large fire for about a year then boiling it in urine. The urine was collected in the big cities, like London, then brought in barrels by ship to the bottom of the cliff then up the cliff to the quarry (we had all the 'taking the piss' jokes). I'm

surprised the smell has cleared even after 150 years. Incidentally, alum was used to fix the die in cloth and to increase the vibrancy of the colours.



Following the coast south we came to the beautiful village of Staithes. Above Staithes is the 'Cow Bar' a small nettle, thistle and bramble infested peninsular forming one arm of the bay. Whilst some of us

tried to conquer the Cow Bar and further the name of the FMC, Nizzy stuck to the traditions of the organisation and downed a pint in the Cod & Lobster. Southward again to Port Mulgrave and butties. A couple of rows of houses on top of the cliff, Port Mulgrave was, in the early 1800's a port from which iron ore was exported by sea to foundries in Newcastle. The ore was brought from inland through a tunnel exiting at the foot of the cliff. On then to Runswick Bay where we all enjoyed a beer whilst taking in the view across the bay from the pubs beer garden. Then across the sands, up the cliff past Kettleless to Sandsend on the old railway track. John and Del Stockton left us were to make an early getaway home. Finally along the 3 miles of beach to Whitby to pack-up, meet the landlady, pay the bill and off home.



And another thing.

As we walked from the digs into town a well practised Seagull on his aiming platform on top of a lamppost selected a target from our squad and with the accuracy of a laser guided bomb shat a mighty shit upon poor Dave W. and Dave W. alone, causing little or no collateral damage.

This was a very enjoyable trip to scenic Whitby with good fish & chips, seagulls and good beer in proper pubs with floor boards and toilets that really are part of the drainage system. We will probably run the trip next year, so why not come along, the weather cannot be guaranteed but the pubs can.

**Clive Bell**

All the photographs supplied by Clive Bell.  
Taken on the Whitby meet. Thanks Clive

There was only a select group booked in – which is a euphemism to hide the fact that there were only a few takers to visit this superb area. Two cancelled through illness which left four who had so much room that you could each have swung a cat in it. This cropped up as we were reminiscing about our early meets in this hut, many years ago, when Dave Laycock brought the coal, George tried burning a local cat, and there was some erratic darts thrown in the Slaters arms. Just how many years ago we could not remember! ( Does anyone know the origins of the phrase “not enough room to swing a cat in”- one for the pub quiz team members perhaps.)

On the Saturday Mike Howe, Barrie Crook, June and I drove to Dinas Mawddwy and we walked back to the hut across the tops. Good views all round some sun but mainly cloud, fortunately above the hills.

Sunday and we went to the Rhinogs to try a circular walk that we had sussed out from the map. The map did not tell us about the field of cows with a large bull. It was not the least bit interested in us but that did not stop one of our party becoming agitated and increasing speed. Eventually we made a ridge and were rewarded with a fine panorama over the mountains and over the sea. When we gained the summit the cloud arrived as well – we had atmospheric views as the cloud kept parting and reforming. Having spent some time watching the ever changing views we descended, picked up an old quarry track and made our way many miles across country back to the cars and headed out for a pub meal on the way home.

**John Wiseman**

### **Hut to Hut**

Eight walkers turned up at Little Langdale on the Friday night. The following morning saw Clive and Kevan, Woodsey and Hal, and Dave Walker and the Prince of Darkness setting off as pairs on their various routes to Stair; as did Dave Ball and Sarah en velo. Geoff Bellingham and myself drove round with all the gear. At Stair we found assorted climbers most of whom were just getting out of bed and still scratching themselves.

Geoff went for a walk up the valley, the climbers disappeared off in the direction of Gable, and Christine and I had a walk round part of Buttermere. The evening brought a convivial session in the pub, the evening being rounded off by the arrival of the last two walkers at two thirty am the following morning! Well its an improvement on the previous year!

On the Sunday, nobody wanted to walk the whole way back, so Geoff dropped Clive and Kevan off at the end of Borrowdale, and then Geoff and myself ferried all the other walkers and the gear back to Little Langdale; where we mostly sat in the sun until it was time to go home.

**Mike Penn**



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**FMC Website**    [www.fyldemc.org.uk](http://www.fyldemc.org.uk)