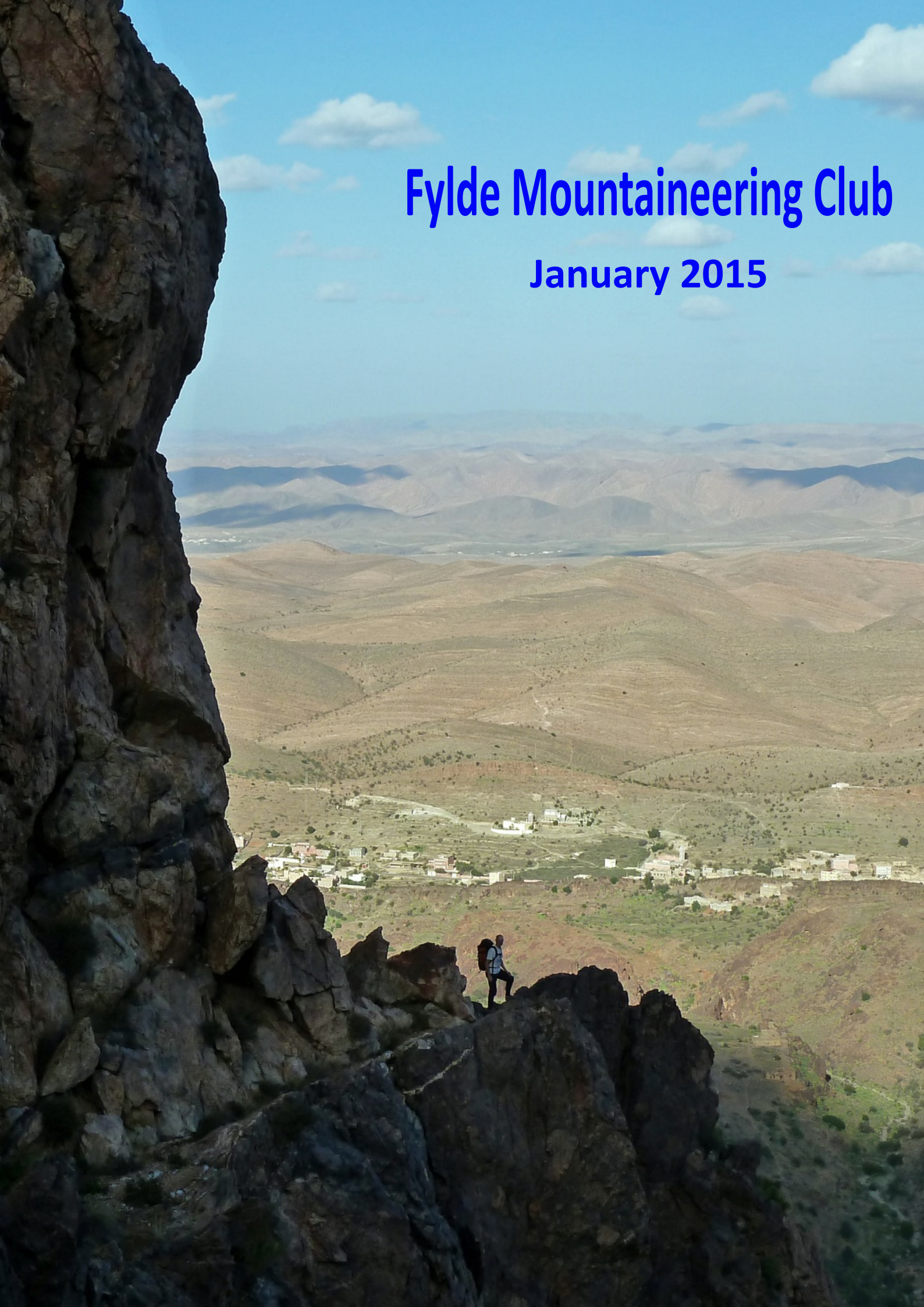


# Fylde Mountaineering Club

January 2015



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# Editorial

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Well this is it folks, my final edition of the club newsletter as editor. This edition is not quite as large as previous editions, mainly because Martin Bennett seems to have lost his pens, but I am sure that you will find the articles as interesting as always and that they will inspire you to get out there and find your own Dawn Wall adventures - I know that Christine Fry has been inspired this year, as described in her 'My Intro Year' article.

Thank you to all who have assisted in the production of the newsletter over the last four years, be it through provision of articles / photographs, assisting with getting it printed, or the dreaded "stuffing of envelopes". Thank you also for all of the positive feedback.

So it's "Auf Wiedersehen Nobs", so long and thanks for all the fish, and best wishes to my successor.....whoever you are.

*Caroline*



Cover shot provided by Dave Wood:

Mr Cundy on descent from 'Gamma' HVS on Greek Buttress, Sidi Mzal, Anti Atlas



# Chairman's Remarks

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It's that time of year when there is little lull in our outdoor activities, the summer crags are out of condition, the winter lines are just coming into nick and long walks are just not that appealing in poor weather. The time when we look forward to meeting each other for a pint and the 'craic' down the Old Town Hall, and so far so good, the socials this year have been exceptional with a mix of our own members and guest speakers providing the entertainment.

We are always on the look out for willing volunteers to organise meets so if anyone out there has a particular destination in mind and would like to get involved feel free to get in touch, Clive is currently putting the 2015/16 syllabus together and I believe this to be one of our most important tasks, a healthy syllabus with a variety of different meets and destinations sustains the interests of our membership – Your Club Needs You!!

I would also like to recognise the efforts of a few of our committee members who this year will be stepping down from their current roles –

- Firstly thanks to Caroline for her efforts in producing an excellent series of newsletters over an extended time period, this is her final effort and I have been told this one will be a bumper finale issue
- Secondly thanks to both Andy & Liz or is that Liz & Andy for their efforts in coordinating hut bookings, a number of system improvements have been implemented during their period of tenure to increase income and make bookings easier so very well done
- Thirdly a big thanks to Chris who has kindly looked after the Langdale Hut for as long as I can remember, keeping the huts maintained for our members to enjoy is no mean feat and is greatly appreciated by all those who use them

Hopefully I will see you next at the AGM

*Darren Hartley*

# Bequests

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Dear Member

You will be aware that many organisations, including some mountaineering clubs, have benefited over the years from individual bequests. Whilst encouraging our members to remain active within the club we cannot ignore the fact that we have an ageing membership. We obviously want to see the club continue to thrive in the future and I would therefore ask you to consider leaving an amount, no matter how small, to the club for the benefit of future generations of club members. This could be left for the general fund and used to support activities of the club members and operation of the huts. However, I would be prepared to set up a separate fund to be used for specific projects and we would endeavour to meet any special wishes declared by the benefactor.

I realise this may be touching on a subject we don't like to contemplate but please give this some serious thought and whilst there is no need to provide any specific information it would help if you notified me of any arrangements you intend to put in place.

*Mike Howe*

FMC Treasurer (On behalf of the committee)

# Ladies Meet, Weekend 6 Sept 2014

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"IF YOU CAN MEET WITH TRIUMPH AND DISASTER...."

With a fair forecast for the weekend, Chris and I drove up to find Little Langdale basking in sunshine and the cottage smelling of fresh paint after the previous working weekend. With the excuse that the premises needed airing and that the temperature was warmer outside than in we sat on the bench outside for a glass of wine and a chat with the man next door.

Reports of adders sunbathing on the warm stones made us cast a wary eye around and decamp inside to make up our bunks. Then DISASTER struck.....Chris had left her sleeping bag behind! An appeal to the man next door for a spare blanket met with an old sheet and some muttering about his deposit. Chris heroically declined his offer to allay his obvious reluctance. Perhaps he was aggrieved at not being offered a glass of wine.

The arrival of Jennie, Sue, Frances and Big Liz gave cause for more wine and offerings of the loan of various extra garments. Thanks to the insulation qualities of modern textiles, Chris passed a reasonably comfortable night.

Saturday's plan was for an onslaught on Crinkles from the Three Shires Stone, returning via Cold Pike. We had had an aborted attempt in March due to adverse weather, but this time we woke up to sunshine. After a not so early start and an anxious discussion as to who should drive up, two cars completed the Wrynose Challenge. Base camp having been established to our general satisfaction, the walk in began at a steady pace, pausing only to watch with interest a trio of climbers whose voices were drifting across the valley from a nearby craglet. The middle climber was requiring considerable encouragement, earnestly calling for a tight rope. How sound carries on a still day. Perhaps he heard us first, which may have caused the jitters!

As the gradient increased above Red Tarn, and some serious effort would be needed, the call went up for sustenance. (Well it was the crack of noon) Settling down amongst the rocks to eat, we were startled by a gentleman on the descent! We asked where he had come from. "Dungeon Ghyll, Bow Fell, Esk Hause, Crinkles. Not bad for a 77 year old" he announced proudly as he continued down the path. Impressed, we packed up and began our scramble to the tops, two of us bypassing the Bad Step, pleading inexperience (Chris) and infirmity (myself) to join the other for a second lunch on the summit, where Jenny appeared to be dispensing coffee to a needy male in need of revival. To record Chris's first ascent, photos were duly taken before our descent via Cold Pike, during which, Frances took a diversion to go geo-caching.

Back at the hut, we were joined by Pat and Gill for dinner and to celebrate Liz's imminent birthday (I won't reveal the lady's age) with a special cake made by Jennie and plenty of vino. Suspiciously, Jen declined dinner, claiming she was saving herself for cake. Did she forget to bring it?

Sunday morning was glorious and in an attempt to keep the cakeaholics out of Chester's Coffee Shop, meet leader persuaded all but two to settle for a leisured walk via Hodge Close to Tilberthwaite and thence back to the cottage to consume remaining birthday cake. This finished up as an unintended hike to Coniston after the realisation that (a) meet leader took a wrong turn, (b) it was too short. After coffee at the Yew Tree pub, lunch was promised by the lake, which unfortunately proved elusive to access, so was eventually eaten on a grassy bank on the approaches to Tilberthwaite.

Meanwhile our junior section (non retirees Frances and Gill) had scaled the heights of Wetherlam, photographed the Red Arrows over Windermere, found three caches on Swirl How and Great Carrs and finished with a swim in Rob's Hole. How's that for TRIUMPH?

*Mary Aspin*

## Sicily by Jennie Tolley

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Just a quick résumé of our trip to Sicily. For once we signed up on an organised group tour - with Exodus - the logistics of a 'Do It Yourself' trip to include the various objectives was a deterrent! So we compromised and had a week with the Volcano Climbing Group, but then stayed on, hired a car and explored Sicily independently - making it up as we went along.

Saturday 13th September we drove down to Gatwick, stayed overnight in a local B&B and left the car there for the duration. Saturday we flew to Catania, met up with the group and guide, and mini bus to the port of Milazzo. Hydrofoil to the Aeolian Island of Lipari and rooms in a small fishing village looking out to sea at several of the other Aeolian Islands including the impressive smoke spouting Stromboli.



We climbed a local hill walking through the shiny black obsidian detritus from former volcanic activity and feasted on local food and wine at night by the wave lapping beach.

Tuesday , a boat trip to the nearby Island of Vulcano where we climbed the eponymous volcano(!) Sulphur fumes emitting from fissures and cracks, catching in our throats, the ground hot beneath our feet. People were bathing in nearby mud pools, smearing their face and bodies with the grey mud from the bottom. Their hopes of a visual transformation could well be realised in a couple of months time as the mud is highly radio active! We had a wine tasting evening event in Lipari town at night - local wines and appetisers which needless to say were well beyond our financial means to purchase any other way!

A boat trip to the adjacent island of Salina was enjoyable, spectacular rock scenery , several stops for swimming - which we opted out of as the beautiful clear water also looked extremely deep, wet and salty for wimps!

We transferred to the island of Stromboli which is dominated by the exceedingly active volcano of the same name. In the evening we climbed as high as is currently allowed - the scientists are worried that recent changes from regular explosions, to extreme lava flow, predicts a major 'happening'! We sat as night fell, picnicked in the dark watching occasional spectacular eruptions and the lava streams glowing red hot flow down the mountain side into the sea. Magic!

We returned to Sicily and stayed a night in a Mountain Refuge on the southern flanks of Mt. Etna. The following morning we climbed the volcano. First a cable car, then a 4x4 vehicle before the final unaided slog. The last 1500ft was very hard going in the thin air with slippery ash underfoot. The summit crater is 3343 metres above sea level (approx 11,000ft.) The crater is immense, plunging vertically down tottering cliffs into an unseen depth masked by clouds of sulphurous smoke. The entrance to Hades indeed! Scraping away the surface volcanic dust revealed snow and ice beneath - it reminded me of 'Baked Alaska Pudding'! The descent from the summit was aided by a wondrous 1000ft steep 'scree run' down the ash cone - swooping ahead of clouds of





dust from our scurrying heels as we hot footed it (literally) down to the more oxygenated level of the lava fields below. We were covered head to foot in black dust - even my mascara was ash coated! (Yes of COURSE one should always climb volcanoes in full make up!)

Following a night in Catania we split from the group, picked up our hire car at the airport and set off to Palermo the Provincial Capital. After weaving our way for an hour up and down/round and round the traffic clogged streets of the city centre (and this was a Sunday - a quiet day!) dodging maniacal Italian kamikazes on suicide missions (*Ed: years I've been trying to forget the trauma of driving through Palermo and you just had to go and remind me*), we eventually found our hotel and thankfully parked the car for the duration of our two night stay in Palermo.

Palermo is a beautiful city when not viewed from the inside of a car. Ancient Baroque buildings, endless culture and the pleasures of the ubiquitous evening promenade viewed from a street side table with glass (or three) of wine and a good meal.

Next stop three nights in Ragusa, a stunningly attractive hill town. This is where the Inspector Montalbano T.V. series was filmed. Spectacular baroque buildings and squares, labyrinthine alleyways, cafes and trattorias to tempt the tastes and endless wanderings in uncrowded, breathtaking streets. We had a B&B called Il Giardino dei Sospiri (The Garden of Sighs) which lived up to its name - we went ahhhh every time we walked into it!. Breakfast and evening wine beneath shady vines and the company of a white kitten and two tortoises. magic once again.

Finally two nights by the sea in Syracuse staying in an alleyway in the old town. More 'baroquery', wanderings, good food and wine. This was a holiday of 'two halves' the energetic challenges of the volcanoes counter pointed by the laid back chilling out of the hill towns and old sea ports.

*Jennie Tolley and Peter Scholefield*

# Time at Dartmoor

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164 of you members missed out on a fantastic week on Dartmoor. We six venturers Tony M, Geoff B, Tom K, Jennie, Peter and me had a great time with fantastic weather whilst pursuing a variety of adventures.

We set off on Saturday morning 12th July for the long journey south made even longer by a ten mile roadwork on the M6 near Brum' which took over an hour to negotiate. We arrived at the Fox Tor bunkhouse in Princetown in the centre of Dartmoor in fog and grot after leaving the Fylde in glorious sunshine. After settling in to the Bunkhouse we went the 100 yds to the 3 Feathers for some beer. Three great ales brewed just up the road. Arguably the best one called Jail Ale. At £3.80 it had to be good!



Sunday morning and Mike Penn, our south western member, turned up, he lives in Launceston about 20 miles away. We all set off for a walk, via Crazy well Pool, over Cramber Tor (420m) and its bronze age settlements and tin mines (no bronze people though). Our journey took us over a river bridge made from large slabs of rock (Leather Tor Bridge). A couple were sat enjoying the sunshine and scenery. The man explained that his great, great, great grandfather had helped to build the bridge in 1839 and the total cost was £29-10s-0d, who paid this enormous sum he didn't say.



On the way back from the tor we followed a flume in which I swear the water went uphill!!!

Ice cream? with an ice cream van in the car park, who could resist?

With the sun shining down on us Monday seemed to be a good day to visit Plymouth with its harbours, boats and oldy worldy narrow streets. We walked up to the Hoe were Francis D played his famous game. Not today though, it was all fenced off preparing for a pop concert.

In the garden at the back of a cafe, cream and scones seemed like a good idea, and it was. A seagull had the same idea, sitting on its perch watching and waiting. When people finished and then left it swooped down and finished off the jam and cream.



Back via Tesco in Tavistock for provisions. Eats in the bunkhouse then the 3 feathers. People were eating pies, they looked good. Apparently you order you wait while it is cooked from scratch then it's served up. We will do that tomorrow night.

Tuesday morning, Princetown, it is at 420m was covered in mist and low cloud, It seemed a coastal walk would be in order. We drove to Salcombe through the typical narrow roads flanked by high stone walls disguised with vegetation. Boots on and a walk along the cliff path in glorious sunshine to Hope. The feel of the day and the sparkling sea was as if we were in the Mediterranean. We met a couple who were staying at a posh hotel in Hope, their family had payed for them to stay there for the lady's 70th birthday. We explained that we were in a bunkhouse for about £10 per night. They said they had just paid £10 each for a ham and cheese butty! Apparently he used to work at BAE in Bristol and was a frequent visitor to Warton. Ice cream, then back to the 3 feathers for a pie. Mike and Carole Penn turned up for a long natter.



There is one thing Dartmoor is famous for and it is situated in Princetown and it has a museum which makes an interesting visit. The prison was originally built to accommodate prisoners from the Napoleonic wars in 1806-09 and later to house American prisoners in 1813. During their stay the prisoners built the church just down the road. After the two conflicts ended and the prisoners went home the

building was left empty and was then reopened for its present use as a prison in 1846.

Tony, Geoff and Tom went to ride the West Somerset Railway steam train, Minehead. So after the prison I went for a solo walk from Princetown over the moor and eventually to South Hessary Tor. At the tor were two young lasses who asked, "Have you seen a pony?". "Well, yes there are lots on the moor". Apparently the way things are today people bring their unwanted pets here and set them free on the moor! The two girls were trying to find it and give it a little TLC. On my odyssey I was puzzled by a number of stone posts by the side of the path with PCWW1917§ on them?



Yet another glorious day on Thursday so off to Norsworthy Bridge and Down Tor (366m) then back via cuckoo rock (god knows where that name came from). The "young lads" of the party did Sheep Tor (369m) whilst I watched some of the pretty local ponies playing on the grass by the car park. Ice cream, Tavistock for supplies another great day among the settlements.

Friday was a steam train day, drive to Totnes and the South Devon Steam Railway then a pleasant puffer train trip to Buckfastleigh. A wander around the town, lunch in a pub then puffer back to Totnes for a look around the engine sheds. Ice cream in the cafe then back to Princetown via another ice cream shop. The night was spent in the 3 feathers with pies all round.

A full English breakfast in the Fox Tor Cafe, pay the bill and then the long weary journey home.

This was a very enjoyable week with good weather, good food, good company, ice cream and a beautiful part of the country. The bunkhouse had its shortcomings but would I stay there again? yes I would.



*Clive*

§ PCWW 1917 = Plymouth Council Water Works 1917



# A Walk on Dartmoor ©John Macadam

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## **A 12 MILE CIRCULAR WALK FROM PRINCETOWN**

*This is a 12 mile long circular winter walk to introduce people to a little of the long history of the moor - and to get a range of textures beneath their boots!*

"No district in England of similar extent is so rich in pre-historic remains, and in none does nature wear a wilder aspect" wrote William Crossing in his comprehensive 'Guide to Dartmoor' published in 1909. This walk takes you through several millennia of human endeavour, not to mention 280 million years of geological history. You will experience most of the terrain Dartmoor offers, though not the bogs! Nor will you be anywhere near the military ranges. The route is never far from exit points to roads but you still need suitable equipment for winter walking, no matter how fine the weather is when you start. You also need a compass (and the ability to use it!) and a map, and for this walk a 1:25,000 outdoor leisure map is best.

To make more sense of what you will see an hour or so in the visitor centre will be well spent but unfortunately it does not open until 10 am.

To start the walk cross the Plymouth-Exeter road in front of the centre and walk up the road between the Devil's Elbow and the Plume of Feathers through the gate and walk along the wall up the hill to South Hessary Tor.

Where the wall veers off to the left carry on along the path for about 700 yards. You will pass granite markers labelled 'PCWW 1917', marking the boundary of the catchment area for Plymouth City Water Works' Burrator Reservoir. Turn right where the tracks cross, cross the leat carrying water to Devonport and continue on the main path down the valley. You pass a restored medieval cross on your left and gradually drop away from the leat. There are many old tin workings in this area: hummocky ground in valley and scars on hillsides where water was used to flush away the lighter waste overlying the dense tin-bearing gravel. Blowing houses were medieval smelters.

Walk alongside the mainly coniferous wood for about 500 yards then take the track leading off to the right in a newly planted area. After 40 yards bear left downhill to the stream which you cross by the bridge (Leather Tor Bridge). The track now leads uphill and over the Devonport leat again. Take an immediate right and go upstream for about 50 yards before you head off up Leather Tor. Not much track here! But it's a good scramble and from the top you get extensive views down to Plymouth Sound. On a clear day you can see Staddon Heights crowned with the radio towers while below and to the right are the Breakwater and Palmerston's Fort. Closer to hand is Burrator Reservoir surrounded by

forests. From Leather Tor head roughly north, skirting the east side of Sharpitor and make for the roadside car park. Here you follow the flat path NW off the saddle until you turn right along the railway. This was originally built in 1823 as the horse-drawn Princetown and Dartmoor tramroad to take the quarried granite down to the River Plym, but had to be modified for the steam railway of the Yelverton - Princetown branch of the Great Western Railway which finally closed in 1956.

Just after the diversion for the cycle path (where a bridge is missing) you can go into an old quarry north of Ingra Tor. Still obvious are two strongpoints for cranes and you can see how the granite was split using 'tare and feathers'. Beneath the next embankment you can make out not only tin streaming works but the very tight curve of the old horse-drawn railway which saved building an embankment. Below too are the remains of Yestor Farm, deserted since the 1860s. Swelltor has a suite of sidings as it was a far more important quarry. Up to your right the main quarry entrance is guarded by a row of granite corbels standing very easy like a line of drunken soldiers.

The track carries on round King's Tor and here you must strike out towards Merrivale, nestling in a steep valley but overlooked by a mothballed granite quarry. Access is not allowed to the enclosed ground ahead of you so you must circle it to the right. This is a blessing in disguise as much of the granite shows evidence of early working when rock was split by wetting dry wooden wedges already hammered into holes.

You can cross the stream by the ford, or the stepping stones, and you will recognise yet another stream worked for tin. Head towards the taller standing stone. This is 10'6" tall and just beyond it is a low stone circle. Just to the north are two double rows of small standing stones.

Decision time! Do you want to go down to the Dartmoor Inn with its log fire in Merrivale hamlet .... maybe to think about the amazing archaeological richness of this area? Rows, menhirs, a circle, barrows, hut circles, a reave and a burial cist: why so much in a tiny area?

Resuming your walk parallel with the rows upstream of the leat (though take care not to foul it as it's drinking water) to the small enclosure with a few trees. You might choose to walk around the hillside below the leat looking for hut circles as there are some spectacularly clear ones (just add roof-poles, lash together and cover with turf and bracken, then move in).

Head 500 yards ESE to another rectangular enclosure, with 2 trees: a few yards down a track south west of this is a small quarry, an insignificant feature which none the less has a 'letterbox'. In the area around you can see waist-high slabs

of granite with a clear area on one side: sett makers workplaces. Here men would have laboriously shaped granite setts for urban roads.

From the enclosure head off across the tussocky grass to the BBC aerial on North Hessary Tor. This dates from 1954-5, very recent in this ancient landscape. Below to the east is Dartmoor Prison, originally built at the beginning of the nineteenth century when the scandal of Napoleonic prisoners in rotting hulks in Plymouth became too great. From the tor with its trig point at 517m keep the wall on your left and descend into Princetown, past the fire-station to the visitor centre.

## **FACT FILE**

**Start & Finish:** High Moorland Visitor Centre, Princetown

**Maps:** Dartmoor, Outdoor Leisure 28, 1:25,000 (waterproof available)  
Harvey's Map Dartmoor South, 1:40,000 (waterproof)

**Getting there:** Princetown is on the direct route, B3212, between Exeter and Plymouth.

**Parking:** High Moorland Visitor Centre.

**Distance:** 12 miles (19.2 km)

**Time (approx):** 6 hours

**Public Transport:** Difficult in winter. A good service links Plymouth (BR) and Tavistock (services 83, 84, X83) but Tavistock and Princetown have two buses per day Monday-Friday only. Enquiries: 01752 222666.

**Tourist information:** High Moorland Visitor Centre, open daily, except Christmas Day, 10.00 am - 4.00 pm minimum. Telephone: 01822 890414.

**Refreshments:** In Princetown, and the Dartmoor Inn at Merrivale.

**Accommodation:** In addition to pubs, B&Bs, etc the Plume of Feathers in Princetown has a bunkhouse and campsite. If you wish to wild-camp you can obtain the code for backpack-camping from the visitor centre. So long as you are out of sight of roads and houses, and at least 100 yards from a road, not in a reservoir catchment area nor in enclosed moorland, there should be no problem if you leave the area as you would wish to find it.

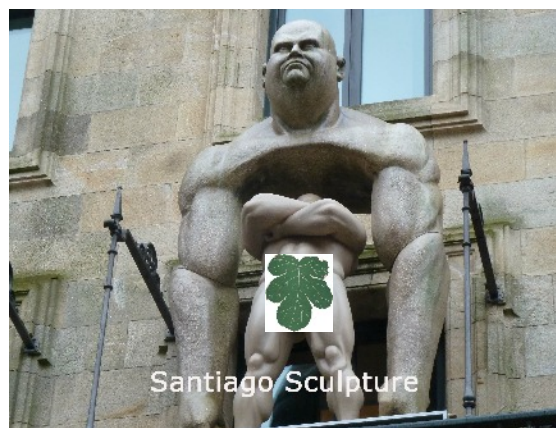
# Asturias, Galicia and the Cordillera de Cantabrica

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Not really names that spring to mind when we think of Spain. No.... Asturias is not a form of creamed rice and Galicia does not play for Juventus. Mention, however, the Picos de Europa and a glimmer of recognition may spread across the face of the well-travelled mountaineer.

Uncertain of exactly what the August Bank holiday 2014 had in store, Hal and I made a swift purchase of the recently published book 'Roca Verde' and got hold of two cheap Ryanair tickets to Santiago-de-Compostella. All very last-minute.com.

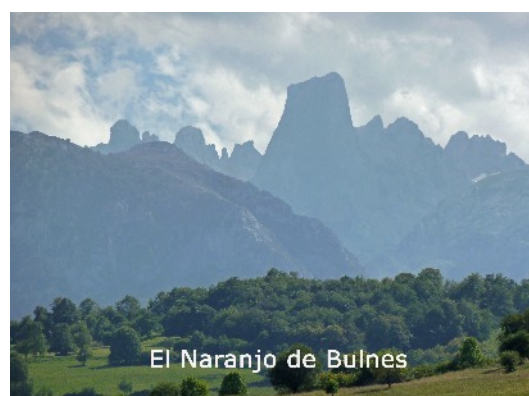
Santiago is the historic capital of Galicia and the starting point for the pilgrim walk of St James which ends in the Pyrenees. Worth a trip in its own right, Santiago is just 70 km or so from Atlantic beaches which really merit exploring if you have the time, inclination and weather. We were lucky to catch the weather but had to do a whistle stop trip down the west coast in order to get on with the climbing. Nevertheless we did manage to fit in 3 days sightseeing during our 10 day trip.



Moving inland we headed to areas north of the city of Leon. This is the place that the Galicians often come to escape the wetness of the west coast. We caught it in a heat wave and had to climb mornings and evenings. We developed a pattern of arriving in a town or village in the evening, finding a hostel, doing a route or two then moving on to a new area the morning after to find a new crag. In this manner we were able to visit five of the six major areas and some eight crags in seven days. All of our routes were

bolted but there is plenty of scope for multi-pitch routes. For the avid biker there is also scope for lots of hill climbing, as we noted when our paths crossed a major cycle event in which Chris Froome was lagging in fourth.

Our plan was to head into the middle of the Picos de Europa and snatch a day or two on the Naranjo de Bulnes – the impressive plug of limestone that is Spain's answer to El Cap, but needless to say, smaller. We had been there some 4 years ago and I wanted to recce the first two pitches of the Rabado-Navarro route. This time around, we gazed at it from the village of 'Poo', having just passed through the national park of 'Ponga.' We





wondered what more may be on offer, but as usual the scenery was excellent. However, with time running out and already 1000 miles of motoring under our belt, we had to do an imaginary ascent from one of Asturia's splendid Cidreas (cafe-pubs which specialise in cider). Not caring much for cider we had to suffer the excellent Estrella Galia and the occasional locally brewed pale ale (*Ed: oh the pain and suffering you poor people go through*).



Typical cloud inversion in the Picos



Steeper stuff to come!

All in all, an excellent 10 days and a place that we could recommend to climbers, walkers, bikers and families looking for a September holiday. Even better if you have a camper van. You are not likely to come across many English people outside of Santiago. In fact we met only two – next door neighbours of Dave Ward!

Just one word of caution. Richie Patterson has done a good sell in promoting Roca Verde in magazines throughout 2014. Although not acknowledged by Richie, his book appears to lean heavily on the work done by others, including the earlier and more comprehensive work of Miguel Angel Adrados. I doubt very much that there are 443 routes less than 6A (as advertised) as many I tried below and at that grade were exceedingly stiff.

Again this is a case where the 'easier' grades are harder (think Preston Wall!). This means that if you are climbing into the 6's you will have plenty to go at but, as is often the case, you have to be selective below that. Notwithstanding all of this, it is a beautiful place and one that we will return to.

*Dave Wood*



More Like the South China Seas



Hal climbing at Quiros

# FMC Mug of the Year Award

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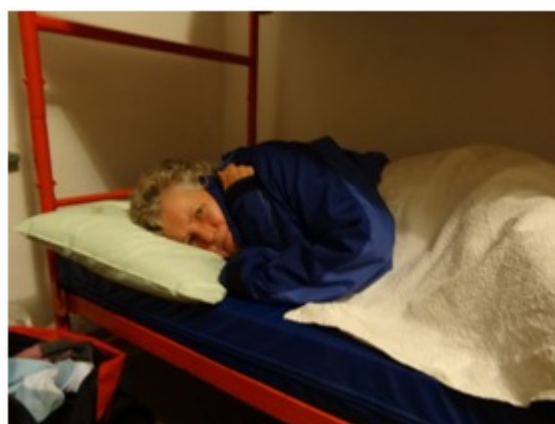
Having received the award last year for something insignificant (isn't it always !) it fell to me to identify suitable victims for embarrassment at this year's dinner. In spite of rumours to the contrary there was no shortage of nominations this year – at least 10% of the members have managed something daft over the last year.

I started with some of the silly ones, which members of the audience tried to embellish!

- Leanne parked her car nearly in a bog and had to be towed out. Her tow rope broke in the process.
- Martin Dale bought some honey for Joanne then had it confiscated at the airport
- Donald wondered why he could not gain access to the previous months social --- though he did think it strange that the room was rather dark. He finished his pint and went home confused and . . . . . yes he had not read his Whats On properly and was a week late!

Every year some people have gear issues

- Rebecca Hicks, assisted to Tony Hulme went to buy new boots, tried them on, but managed to go home with..... 2 right boots. Lovely colour though !
- Reported from the Ladies Meet in March, Delphine went one step further by bringing BOTH of John's boots to wear whilst Mary forgot BOTH of her boots completely
- Christine Fry attended a Ladies weekend at Stair back in Sept and forgot to take her sleeping bag. She actually looks quite cosy!



Then we had the usual problems with navigation – I thought that navigational skills were a pre-requisite for membership?

- At the fell race weekend Joanne managed to miss the flags dutifully put out by Mark and Viv and got half way up Maiden Moor before realising her mistake. Some people will try anything to get a more favourable handicap for next year.
- Dave Hicks, Karen & Leanne set out to Glaciated Slabs in Combe Ghyll to meet the rest of the team. Dave seemed a bit uncertain of the starting point but they got all toggled up and started walking, for what seemed an eternity!!! Where are the slabs???? Well after at least 2 miles they spotted someone and Dave went for advice. Leanne and Karen stayed put and then saw the map and lots of pointing, Dave said “the man said to go tother way just on your right”. So they all went “tother way” and still didn’t find it. Dave said “WHERE ARE WE!! - lets go and get the map”. Having walked the 2 miles back to the car to look at the map they discovered they were in the wrong valley. So it was back into the car round to the real Combe Ghyll where they set off again up the steep incline eventually getting to the crag at 4pm. Just time to climb 1 route before having to get back before night time. Apparently they paid two lots of £3 car parking fees as well.
- At the Torridon meet in March on the way back to the bunkhouse after a day out we stopped to see if the café was open in the evening. Kev and I went out for the meal and wondered where Clive and Barrie had got to – they had gone in the wrong direction (short memories !)

And the big mountaineering whoopsies

- Pendle evening walk. 7 members met at the Nick of Pendle as instructed on the walks sheet but no sign of our leader who lived within sight of the hill. We could not understand and worried about medical problems. We could not decide which of his three mobiles to ring so rang them all, left messages where possible and even rang his home number. With time running out we enjoyed a brisk walk round the summit plateau of Pendle and finished in the dark.

Unknown to us Barrie Crook had decided to start and finish his walk at the pub in Sabden but omitted to tell the club members ! Fortunately he was joined by 3 non members who he had spoken to directly. Apparently

he told them he was really upset that none of his “friends” had bothered to turn up for his walk.

- On the Fairfield Horseshoe day walk Clive acknowledged his slowness uphill and decided to go the opposite way round and meet up with us for the return. So we checked we had each other’s phone numbers (Clive muttering “I don’t know how this B thing works”) and went our separate ways. Part way round I thought I should ring to check he was OK – no answer.  $\frac{3}{4}$  way round we thought we should have met up with him so tried again – no answer then voicemail. Then my phone rang and it was Clive – no his phone hadn’t rung but he wondered where we were (he hadn’t got far). In the pub while discussing the problems with phone calls it emerged his ring volume was turned off ! It seems he now has an Apple computer so potential for next year’s mug !
- Chris This got a team to travel for 1hr 50 minutes to a crag. They then walked through a dodgy river bed and then along the top of a low wall which contained a water channel, which was about 4 feet deep. There were a couple of planks across a 4 feet gap, which they all sauntered across, save for Chris who would not cross it , despite offers of assistance. (not surprisingly Chris tells it different !)

After a resounding success on the “clappometer” the mug is (again) in the hands of Barrie Crook.

*Mike Howe*

## Fell Race and Curry Meet 2014

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19 participants took the starting line (hut doorway) for the 19<sup>th</sup> running of the FMC fell race since the move to Stair from Little Langdale in 2006. This was an excellent turn out considering several regulars had been enticed away by Moroccan sunshine. It was marvellous to have 8 first timers taking part, although it did present a significant handicapping challenge.

The difficulty of handicapping newcomers was compounded by so called friends doing a very convincing job of exaggerating the fitness levels of their mates. Handicapper blagging is an intrinsic part of the fell race build up with most members seeming to rely on it more than training! Whilst there is a distinct trend towards slower times for the race, blagging abilities seem to be improving – if that’s the correct word to use. Mike Sissons is still the blagging record holder



having turned up on the Friday night with his arm in a sling and only removing it as he sprinted off the start line.

Our champion this year is Kevan Ebrell who finished in 56 minutes after 12 attempts including a 2<sup>nd</sup> place, three 3<sup>rd</sup>s and a 4<sup>th</sup>, a deserving winner for consistency alone. Kevan finished just ahead of Hal the fastest of the women with a time of 59 minutes. Martin finished in 70 minutes to bag 3<sup>rd</sup> place bang on handicap with Henry, the fastest male finishing one minute behind in 41 minutes. Clive Bell did his usual leisurely paced photography walk of the course.

Andy Dunhill, the usual catering manager for the fell race was on leave in Morocco so several members volunteered to provide the post-race tucker. Christine provided us with hot soup after the race and Karen, Leanne and Christine cooked a variety of delicious curries in the evening.

Results:

Position	Name	Time	Scratch position	Handicap plus or minus
1	Kevan Ebbrell	56	4	-4.
2	Hal Rzadkiewicz	59	5	-1
3	Martin Dale	70	10	+0.
4	Henry Iddon	41	1	+1
5	Mark Broughton	48	2	+3
6	Karen Purves	65	7	+3
7	Vivienne Broughton	66	8	+4
8	Richard Duerdan	55	3	+5
9	Mike Howe	73	11	+11
10	Tony Hume	62	6	+14
11	Jo Leadbetter	76	13	+14
12	Caroline Webb	69	9	+16
13	Dave Hicks	74	12	+24
14	Becky Hicks	88	14	+26
15	Tom Knowles	118	18	+28
16	Geoff Bellingham	110	16	+37
17	Christine Moylan	110	16	+37
18	Leanne Sutton	88	14	+43
19	Clive Bell	148	19	+58

*Mark Broughton*

# Introductory Members Meet

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*20 September 2014*

Following on from the well-attended July Intro meet, this was another successful event with three intro members making an appearance at Stair.



Christine Fry on Brown Slabs

Again the weather was kind to us allowing ascents on Brown Slabs, Shepherds Crag , by Christine Fry and Leanne Sutton.

Not to be outdone Steve Longworth was giving Steve Clarke a helping hand in rehabilitating his climbing skills and Steve had an evening ascent of Little Chamonix into the bargain.



Steve Clark on Little Chamonix

Sunday saw a bright day and a walk up to Glaciated Slabs for some more rock action. The usual refreshments were on hand.



Leanne Sutton on Glaciated Slabs

All credit to Christine, Leanne and Steve for turning up. Ali thanks to Dave 'Mug Nominee' Hicks, Karen Purves, Hal and Steve Longworth for helping out and to Andy Dunhill for his re-assuring presence.

*Dave Wood*



# Morocco November 2014 Update

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Moroccan trips have become very much a part of the FMC calendar, so much so that reporting the highlights feels almost like giving a report of an annual meet in the UK. Not knowing how much interest these reports generate in our readership, I nevertheless feel obliged to say something about our exploits in the hope that others from the Club will want to sample the varied delights of the Anti-Atlas. On our last occasion seven members of the Club did just that. They were Martin Bennett, Alan Blackburn, Dave Cundy, Andy Dunhill, Matt Reed, Chris This and myself.

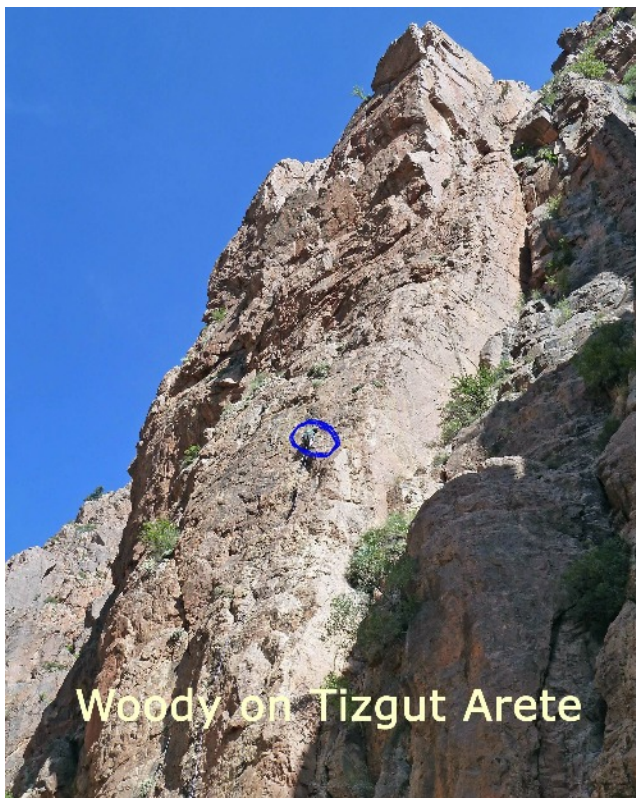
I can't quite recall when we first reported back about the highlights of the Anti-Atlas but it is now quite a while since the Club first ventured out there. On a general, historical note, the climbing potential was probably first discovered Dennis Gray in the late 1980s but it took a trip by Les Brown and Trevor Jones in the early 1990s to start things off proper. Les was anticipating having a walking holiday but after seeing the volume of quartzite rock on offer, contacted his friends (Joe Brown, Derek Walker, Chris Bonington, Claude Davies, Ben Wintringham, Paul Ross, Pete Turnbull and others) and made repeated March and October visits throughout the late 1990s and as recent as 2011.

The first FMC trip came on the heels of the guidebook by Claude Davies published in 2004. Mike and Jenny Tolley, John and Del Stockton, Dave Cundy, Hal and I made a trip out there February 2005. We did one crumbly route on the first day and it rained everyday thereafter. I showed no interest in returning until Martin Bennett invited me back together with Ali Welsh in 2010, having visited the previous year with Robin Andrews, Al Blackburn and Steve Wrigley. They had evidently seen what we hadn't seen back in 2005. The boys had already been putting up new routes (more by accident than design at the time) and their faces were appearing in the newly published guide by Steve Broadbent. Martin had quickly made contact with the guidebook writers and the 'old guard' and as a result of his efforts we were given an invitation by Les Brown to join him and his friends in exploring new areas. We have since been back many times, usually finding something new but always enjoying the ambience of this oasis strung out along the border of the Western Sahara.

On our latest foray we fell mainly in line with expectations to pick more established routes from the guidebook, rather than explore new areas. Our first day was at Anergui, characterised by the E2

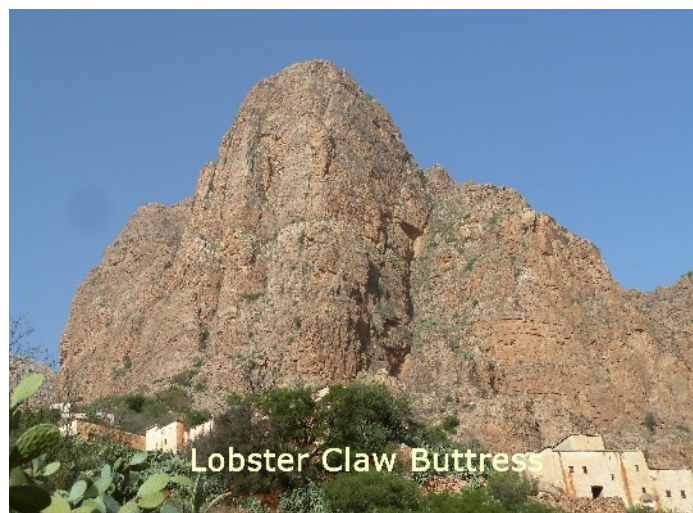


Al Blackburn on first Impressions



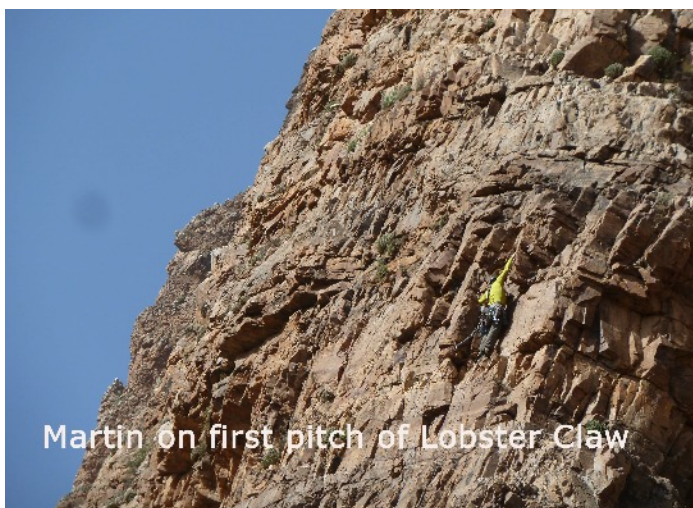
drive, having been downgraded from E? following the laying of slabs of concrete. Martin helped Chris to rehabilitate his broken toe on the bottom tier. Andy helped Al to find his way up First Impressions E1 5b, but being a touch on the loose side it didn't leave a good one. 'Greek Buttress' was an excellent day out with two long HVS's being enjoyed by all. In Tizgut Gorge, I had an exciting exit to Tizgut Arete – a bit of a loooooosener at E1 5a. Dave Cundy made short work of a rather stiff (or at least I thought so) HVS at Tagzene Gorge and Martin followed Andy up the same before soloing many easier offerings. Matt led a route called 'Matt' at Ksar Rock which I managed to more or less demolish seconding. We climbed in ten areas overall in the fourteen days we were there and even fitted in some granite slabs.

Not much was done by way of exploring, but that much said we did manage to find the much sought after 'Lobster Claw Buttress' which Martin had spotted from afar two years previous. Having used Google Earth to isolate its position, we were able to drive almost underneath it. The twin towers of Dolomitic proportions still await their first true ascent as Martin and Al managed only the first pitch on this occasion. I say 'only' as anything else would have been exceptional given the terrain. Elsewhere, Matt and I put up a one pitch VS having to abseil off in the fading light. Also Chris This and I managed to add a VS/HVS to an established crag in the Ameln Valley.



We further explored the recesses of Adad Medni which on this occasion yielded nothing more than a confirmation that our forced abseils during the descent in the dark in March, were indeed justified.

Unfortunately some of us were stopped in our tracks with a 48 hour gastric bug which only Chris and I somehow

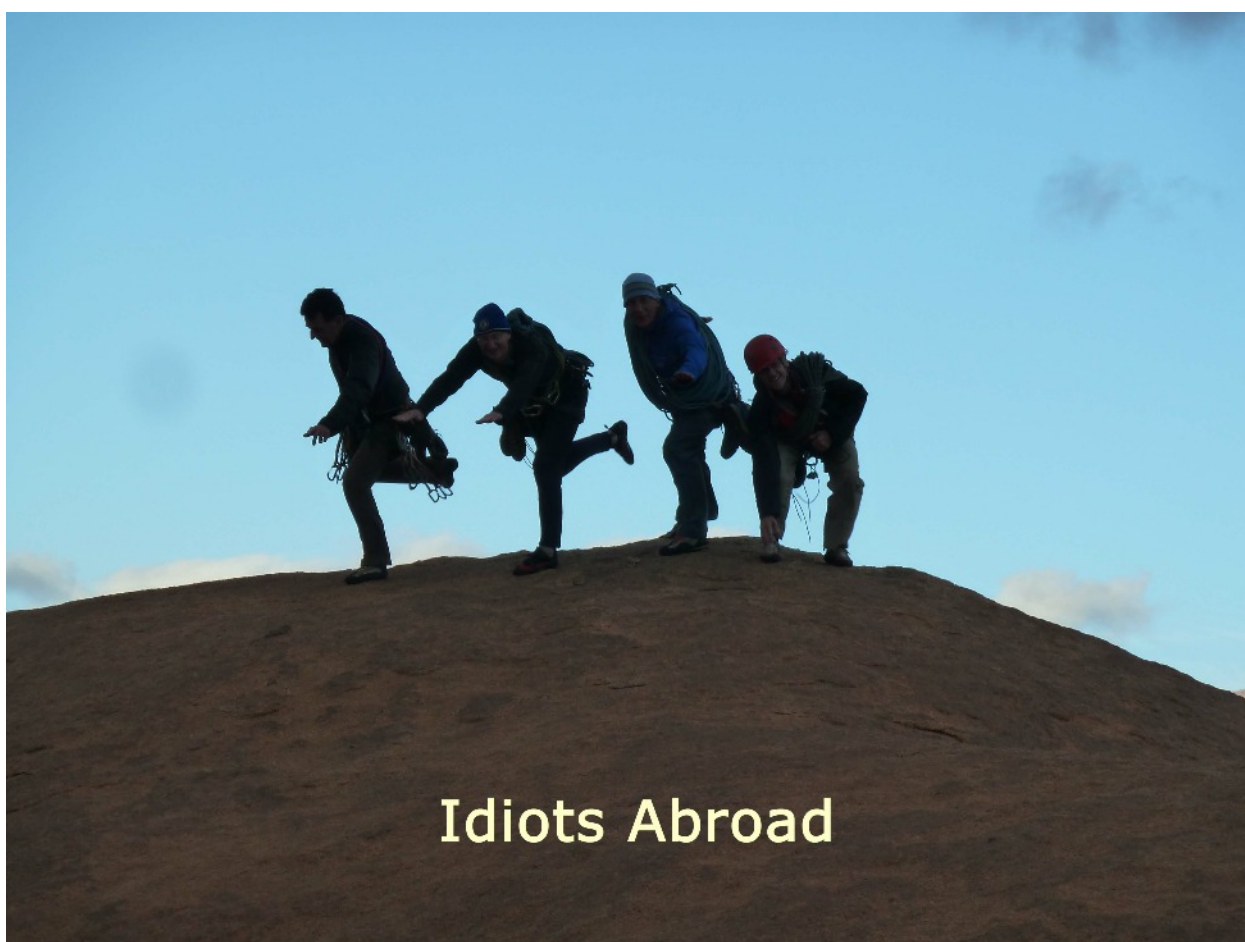




managed to avoid. This dampened spirits for a while but all concerned shook off the lurgy and normal service was resumed shortly.

How much enthusiasm is left for return climbing trips remains to be seen. For my part, I am committed to several more trips as I have signed an agreement with a publisher to produce a walking guidebook for the area. I am hoping some members of the FMC might step forward to assist the process.

In the meantime I hope that the good humour and hospitality that has characterised the Anti Atlas trips and has assisted our passage in recent years, does not depart the Moroccan people like it has in so many other places in the world.



*Dave Wood*

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# My Intro Year 2014

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What can I say except that I have had a great year with great people so here goes!

## MAY

After the enjoyable bangers and mash weekend, I thought I would join the ladies for a change, so Mary and I went off to lovely Langdale - one of my favourite places! We arrived Friday, unpacked, and then it was nice to be introduced to more members. After tea we had a good night settling down for cake, wine, chat and laughter!



Saturday dawned, and Frances decided we would walk over Lingmoor, (a fell I hadn't done before) and although it was cloudy, the weather wasn't too bad really - little did we know what was to come! Everything was going ok till we almost reached the summit then the heavens opened! Time to take some shelter by the rocks! Eventually the rain eased and we carried on over the summit, soon stopping for lunch. No sooner had

we set off again than the rain came pouring down - even worse this time, and the wind was howling down the valley nearly blowing me off the fell side - not good! Once we came down to the valley it wasn't bad compared, and we had a reasonable walk back past the lovely Blea Tarn to the warmth of the cottage and a nice hot cuppa! More chat, wine and laughter that night after tea.

Sunday saw some of us walk over Loughrigg (the weather was a lot better) whilst others had to go home - another enjoyable weekend!

## JUNE

Couldn't believe it when I saw Cragside in the itinerary - I love Cragside - I had to go on this weekend regardless of the weather! It's such an interesting house and the gardens are lovely - it's worth a visit if you haven't been! I arrived on Friday tea time - it took me a while to get there as I decided I wanted to avoid Newcastle, and also I went down a country lane and got slightly lost - all an adventure!

Although the weather forecast wasn't too good for Saturday, it wasn't bad really when we set off for the Simonside Hills. We arrived at the crag and I enjoyed

watching Andy and Chris This climb up - in fact it made me want to have a go - could I possibly one day..... The weather started to turn then, which put paid to any more activities, so we walked back the cars in the mist and rain! Saturday early evening we checked the good beer guide and decide on the pub of choice with Andy and Christine offering to drive us - very kind! Wait a minute I said there are 6 of us - can't fit 6 in the car! Oh its ok somebody said we'll manage! So there we were trying to squeeze in - Andy and Tom in the front (couldn't put Tom in the back with those long legs!) and Christine, Chris, Geoff and I all



squeezed into the back almost sitting on top of each other - it was so funny I just set off laughing! We soon arrived at the pub to find it closed - no laughing then! Oh dear - plan b - to go to Alnwick to the John Bull which would you believe was also closed (*Ed: never thought I'd see the day when the FMC failed to organise a piss up in a brewery!!*)- did we have a plan c - no - time to think again! We soon found another pub though and had a nice couple of beers, drinking some Timothy Taylor before heading back for tea and more 'refreshments' - a good night was had by all!

Sunday came and the weather wasn't too bad but my coat was still wet through, so whilst the others went for a walk I opted to just go round the gardens which was very pleasant!

Whitbarrow scar was my next trip.

This was an evening climb with Angela an Alan leading. Apart from the 5 dogs from the farm that came out all barking at us it was a lovely walk with good views! The evening was rounded off with some good chat and beer in the nearby pub!

## JULY

My first 'Intro' meet this month at Stair - what would be in store this weekend? I arrived again on the Friday (I like to make the most of the weekend) unpacked and walked into Keswick where we were to meet at the George pub. We sat chatting, and after a few beers I said I would like to have a go at rock climbing (well you do become brave after a few beers don't you!) Would I - wouldn't I..... Well Saturday dawned and the question was did I want to come climbing, and if so would Martins harness fit me? Oh dear it did fit me - did this mean I was destined for the rocks?..... Well, come with us the others said, and if you don't want to climb, there are walks around where we are going (oh good, a get out clause if needed!) Off we went to Shepherds Crag in Thirlmere and walked up to the base. It's not that I didn't want to try it, but how would I be after only doing it once when I was in



my twenties?? Well, harness in place and up the rock I went while Martin was encouraging me from the bottom! I was fine till about a third of the way up when I wasn't sure whether I wanted so much space between me and the ground, but again with Martin and now Jo's encouragement I carried on and made it to the top - great stuff! I was so pleased, but declined when Martin asked me if I wanted to climb another route - enough excitement for one day! I must admit though I was sorry after - once I saw Jo going up a different route again, I wished I was doing it too - never mind another time - (did I really say that?) A really good afternoon was had by all, and we finished it off by going to The George (surprise surprise) before Dave made us a nice meal back at the hut!

On Sunday some of the members had to depart for home but I had a nice leisurely walk up the Newlands Valley calling at the café in Little Town for a nice cup of tea!

### **ANDYS working weekend at Stair**

I set off and arrived Friday to find everybody working hard painting the hut, and very nice it was looking too! I got to work in the kitchen and started to give it a thorough clean! As the weather was nice we had tea in the garden finishing that off with a blackcurrant pie I had made! (I must admit I do like cooking!)



Saturday we carried on - I finished the kitchen and then

we went onto clean the mattresses! As there was a good turnout of members, and a lot of the jobs had been done by mid - afternoon Andy stopped cracking the whip (ha - ha) and we all did our own thing! Some went into Keswick, some went climbing and I went for a short walk. We had a good night Saturday with Andy making us a nice meal! Home on Sunday worn out!

### **SEPTEMBER**

Now it was time to join the ladies again back in Little Langdale on Mary's weekend. This time I couldn't believe it - I had forgotten my sleeping bag - silly girl, but Mary and Liz came to the rescue with their coats - thanks ladies! A good night was had again on Friday and I wasn't a bit cold with my new 'sleeping bag'!

On Saturday Mary decided we would go up Crinkle Crag (another one I hadn't done!) so we drove up to the three shires stone and set off on our walk. It was a lovely day and there were quite a lot of people about. We had lunch before the 'Crinkles' looking out at lovely views of the Langdale Valley one side, and the sea on the other! On up to the top then where we stopped for a brew and to admire more lovely views - A really enjoyable walk!

On Sunday we had a low level walk in the sunshine to Coniston before heading home later.



My 2<sup>ND</sup> INTRO meet was next at Stair again.

Friday night was the usual chat beer and laughter! Saturday it was time for serious stuff - rock climbing! Dave told me they were going to Shepherds Crag in Borrowdale and did I want to come - oh yes I had to try it again now! We arrived to find it like a kindergarten!



a few children

just climbing up the rocks no fear - I was fascinated by them! Now it was my turn to climb up brown slabs with Woody coming up beside me instructing me and Hal at the top. As it was my 2<sup>nd</sup> climb at this time I felt better, but I think I cheated at one stage and put my knee on the rock (black mark Christine!) I was to do another climb that day - Jackdaw ridge.

Andy had turned up and he suggested this one, so he went first while Hal said she would come up with me! Up we went and although sometimes it seemed easier sometimes it seemed harder as there were not footholds - I just had to put my foot on the slab and trust it wouldn't slip (well I am just learning!) I made it to the top though - good another one! An enjoyable afternoon was had by all and made us thirsty, so some of us called in at the Scafell hotel for a beer or two before Dave made us another nice meal back at the hut - more craic and laughter!

Sunday - oh dear too much wine last night - did I want to go climbing today or would a nice leisurely walk be more prudent? Well, the intention was good, and I set off with the others towards the crag in Rosthwaite, but I wasn't on form at all and am sorry to say I ended up just going for a walk - oh dear! Needless to say though I enjoyed it before heading for home!

## NOVEMBER

Fell race and Curry meet at Stair.

As Andy was going to be away on holiday, Karen Leanne and I were to do the curry and I was to do the soup! Was this a good idea - what if I didn't do enough, what if it wasn't very good - some practice was needed! Although I have cooked plenty of curries before, it was different cooking it for 1 or 2 than cooking it for 20! So here goes - Practice 1 - not bad but could be



better! Practice 2 - adjust the spices - oh dear worse - now it was time to worry!  
Practice 3 - a lot better thanks goodness!

Saturday dawned and time to make soup! I knew it was going to take a while to make - would I have time to walk up the fell (no running for me), but there was plenty of offers of help, which was just as well as I hadn't finished it before I was told I had to get going!

Up and over Catbells I went, managing to slip on wet rock onto my bott - not very dignified! Back to the hut to finish making the soup which I think went down ok (pardon the pun!) Later, some of the members were going to the pub but I had a curry to make (Karen and Leanne had made theirs at home) no going there for me! But it was to be, as more help was at hand in the names Caroline and Kevan so we managed to finish it and Kevan very kindly kept an eye on it whilst we went with Richard to the George to meet the others! Back to the hut after a couple of pints - curry time! Karen made chicken curry, Leanne veggie and mine was a Lamb Rogan Josh - was it ok - I think we passed! *(Ed: you all stood in for Andy very well)* Dave bought a Demijohn of wine which was really lovely - so smooth and mellow - can we have some more next year Dave please...I think everyone had a good night and I needn't have worried we had food to spare!

Sunday saw Leanne and I walk down the Newlands Valley before heading home!  
Garstang and Nicky Nook day walk!

John and June were leading this, and we walked from Garstang to Nicky Nook, down by the reservoir, up over the fells to Calder Vale and back - very nice! The weather was a bit drizzly at times, but there wasn't as much rain as we thought there might, be so we were lucky really! A nice meal in the Robinsons pub in Garstang finished the day off nicely!

## ANNUAL DINNER

I had been looking forward to this all year and was not disappointed! A good night was had on Friday with good craic ale and laughter.

On Saturday Christine Moylon and I walked up Barrow - I like this little fell and the views are lovely! The weather was cloudy but we didn't have any rain really. A nice coffee was had in the Coledale - (coffee!) before heading back to the hut to get ready for the dinner! Some of us went to the George first before heading to the Skiddaw Hotel and food! I had a lovely meal and the service was really good! I don't know how they do it when they have no idea beforehand what anyone





wants! After the meal some of us went for a dance in the other bar and burned off some calories! What an enjoyable night, good food, wine, company, and a good dance - I love a dance!

Sunday saw me stroll down the river and onto Portinscale - a nice pleasant walk.

## DECEMBER

Ladies Christmas meet Stair.

All was sorted re who was bringing what - main course, pudding, decs etc and the mulled wine..... Well Angela usually makes this but was unable to do it this year so Mary and I volunteered! We were going to be one of the first to arrive on Friday, so it was deemed best we made it ready for our return from the theatre (Theatre by the Lake Keswick). There were lots of ingredients so we lined them up and got going - tasting it along the way - well you have to make sure its palatable and - hopefully it would turnout ok! Finally after adding all the ingredients and tweaking it was ready! In no time at all it was time to go to the Theatre so off we went and had an enjoyable evening to come back to the wine and Jennie's delicious mince pies!

On Saturday some of us walked up High Rigg in St Johns in the Vale - what a lovely fell! The views from there were very picturesque as the hills were covered in snow! I did wonder if we were going to get there though as when I set off my brakes were frozen - it's at these times that you notice just how hilly some of the roads are! Luckily after a short while they thawed - phew thank goodness for that!

Sunday dawned cloudy and dull, so after cleaning up Mary and I decided to head for home, calling in at Sizergh Barn Farm shop for coffee and lunch - a nice end to a lovely weekend!

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year with the club. I have had some lovely walks, good climbs, interesting socials, fun and you are all lovely people! I'd just like to thank you all for being so welcoming and also to Martin, Woody and Hal for helping me up the rocks - I never thought I would be doing this at my time of life - just shows you, you are never too old!

*Christine Fry*





Ali Welsh, White Tower Direct (170m HVS+) Ameln Valley, Anti-Atlas Mountains, Morocco.  
Photo by Martin L Bennett