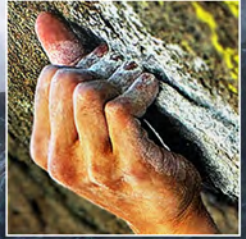


THE FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE



August 2015

in this issue:

Before disaster struck: Impressions of Nepal.
Heroics & high jinks in Calpe and Kalymnos.
Cool times in Kintail, a club dinner recalled,
a tasty pie meet savoured, best of the
bunch from the photo competition,
Facebook pics you might have
missed and a working
weekend . . .



. . . that finds something nasty lurking in the loo!





August 2015

contents

A new look and a new editor desperate not to screw up the job . . . too much or too soon.

Caroline's 4 years at the helm is a tough act to follow, but I'm hoping you'll help me continue to steer a steady course.

After all, this is YOUR magazine

I'm only here to get your tales of derring-do, reports of heroic conquests and thoughts and opinions about pretty much owt you fancy into print, for others in the club to read.

You may already have noticed that I've quietly engineered a name change from *Newsletter* to *Magazine*. So why's that?

Well, when you think about it, the club's timely *What's On* bulletins already deliver news far more effectively than our twice-yearly effort ever could.

I feel that the time has come to consider this publication more as a living record, and affectionate retrospective of six months of club activity. Perhaps it's time we start calling it what it really is... **THE FYLDE MOUNTAINING CLUB MAGAZINE**

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from the Chairman

Midsummer already and although many of us are out and about, and doing plenty, it's a shame we aren't getting up onto the high crags.

Maybe weather hasn't been on our side for the higher stuff to come into nick, but nature has certainly smiled on evening meets and these have proved a great success.

Because updates and venue changes are now being communicated better than ever via text and Facebook, plenty of us have been able to get out virtually every week so far.

Evening walks have also enjoyed fine weather, taking in local delights such as Whitbarrow and Pendle Hill, the latter perhaps under dryer conditions than anticipated?

Anyway, let's promise never to speak of that again* and hope that decent weather holds out well into September, so that whether we're climbing or walking, we can all make the most of it while it lasts.

Of course, even if it doesn't, we still have Steve's packed calendar of social events to look forward to, and that's where I hope to meet as many of our members as possible for a pint and a chin-wag.

Darren



* fat chance of that happening! See page 19



I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as I did in putting it together

please send copy for the January issue to: roy-turner@blueyonder.co.uk

front cover:
Inversion on Harrison Stickle by Dave Wood
from his entry in this year's photo competition

IMPRESSIONS of NEPAL

by Martin Bennett



photographs:
Martin, Magi &
Laura Bennett

It's a while now since we decided it was time we visited Ian, a friend of mine who lives and works in Kathmandu with his Nepali wife Sarita . .



Our stay in Lumbini was brief. Just long enough to see religious relics revered by pilgrims like Sarita.

On our way to Kathmandu, Ian and Sarita had arranged for us to stop off about halfway for a few days at Chitwan National Park, 100 miles from Lumbini. So all six of us piled into Ian's tiny but tough Indian 4WD vehicle and headed for our bungalow at Chitwan. Needless to say, being the tropical part of Nepal, it was raining - and it did so on and off for the next few days - though the jungle humidity didn't bother us much, and the feared mosquito infestation had clearly been overstated. We explored the site



by various means of transport, truck, elephant, canoe, but predictably failed to spot any of the few tigers symbolic of the park. We did see a few rarities though, including the One-Horned



Rhinoceros, and a Gharial, critically endangered with less than 300 worldwide. The one we saw didn't look too big but some of the related

crocodiles were scarily, almost the size of our canoe!



And it was Lumbini that gave us our first impression of Nepal - that its towns and towns-people appear less serious, more laid back and perhaps more open and sociable than their Indian counterparts.

UPDATE: CRISIS in NEPAL

I began writing this article as my offering to Caroline, the previous editor, for inclusion in her final edition of the newsletter, but unforgivably, I missed the deadline. As we now know, since then, the lives of so many in the area have been devastated by violent earthquakes. Langtang was the worst hit valley of all, the village itself completely buried in millions of tons of rock and ice when the top of Langtang Lirung crashed onto the glacier below and surged down into the valley. Many (all?) of the people spoken of and pictured here have lost their lives. The media circus has now moved on and the desperate plight of the people of Nepal no longer attracts attention. But the aftermath persists and won't be resolved for years to come. Right now, there are many who are homeless, some even without proper tents to shelter them from monsoon rains which are now

falling as you read this. It's perhaps to be hoped, that a heavy monsoon might trigger more landslips that could help stabilise the currently precarious steep valley sides. Only then will survivors be able to begin rebuilding their properties and lives. But to do so, they urgently need funding help. Hearing that 'official' foreign aid is sometimes misappropriated due to corruption, my friend Ian suggests donating through **Community Action Nepal** the long established charity founded by Doug Scott after he originally volunteered there, or alternatively **The Himalayan Stove Project**. We've chosen to target our own help on the two valleys to the North East of Kathmandu where Sarita's family live and where villages have also lost people and property, which is why we're sending contributions directly via Western Union, to Sarita Lama.

Thus ended our second impression of Nepal - one of hot, damp overcast forest, sluggish rivers and colourful creatures. Jungle capers over, we piled back into the mini-jeep and headed for Kathmandu in steadily improving weather, arriving to a balmy early evening where, after 4 weeks travelling and overnighting in hotels and on trains, it was a relief to relax in someone's home, with a beer in the garden, naturally. We enjoyed a blissful leisurely few days, gaining our impression of the city of Kathmandu and it's valley in the company of friends with intimate local knowledge, able to show us the very best of it.

As soon as Ian's work permitted, we left for a walk in the Himalayas. Babu was now back at school and our porter Lok had agreed, over a beer of course, to get to the road-head by bus and meet us there at Syabru Bensi. So now, there were only five of us to overload the car.

At about 100 miles, the drive from Kathmandu is relatively short, but the road is such that the journey took about eight bone shaking hours along a road requiring what Ian described as 'low range first gear'. I nodded as though I knew exactly what he meant but wisely declined his offer to let me to take the wheel.



The plan was to walk up the Langtang Valley as far as Kyanjin Gomba and from there, head on to our intended high point, the summit of Kyanjin Ri at 4,800 metres.

continues overleaf

With so many of our host's friends to visit and at the leisurely pace considered essential, we reckoned on 5 days up and 3 days down. Give or take a day or two, this proved to be about right. Needless to say, our impressions of this part of Nepal were *most* favourable - and since the weather now, in early November, if a little cool at night, was perfect every day for the gentle stroll that was all that was required. Laura was the least mountain-travelled of us and had a bit of a problem acclimatising earlier on, but a half-day with no pack (which I carried!) and a good night's sleep soon did the trick, and from then on there was no stopping her.



Eventually we cleared the forest and with the steepest section of the valley behind us, caught our first glimpse of Langtang Lirung (*left*) at 7,234m, towering over the valley and dominating the northerly vista.

On the opposite side of the valley, the fluted summit of 6,501m Gangchenpo (*above*) further enhanced the already superb view. Neither was for us and our next priority was a day or two's rest in Langtang village, visiting homes for tea and chat (sort of, given the language difficulties), helping with chores, playing footy with the kids and quaffing homemade hooch of all kinds, brewed & distilled.



Each day, Lok (*above*) would set off early with the gigantic (but not too heavy we hoped) load that was overnight stuff for 5 of us - 6 counting his meagre requirements, and we would follow after a leisurely breakfast, stopping frequently for a brew or a beer at one of many rest houses, or just a chat with the many who recognised Ian and Sarita as we passed by their homes.



To avoid causing offence, the men were obliged to accept and down whatever came along with gusto and, in some cases . . . with lumps! Then it was just a matter of waiting for jippy tummy to strike. *continued >*



Although hospitality in Langtang Valley is wonderful, homes are invariably dark and filled with smoke, the cause of many sad cases of preventable lung disease.

The **Himalayan Stove Project** is providing safe, efficient, clean-burning stoves which are improving health & saving lives in fragile Himalayan areas of Nepal.

Their volunteer-led charitable work is closely linked-in to relief work in the aftermath of the Nepal earthquakes.



photo: Himalayan Stove Project

LAST LEG and the LURGY LANDS

After a day or two enjoying village life, we set off to hike our last short leg to Kyanjin Gumpa which was where the lurgy hit me, as I was enjoying a bowl of yak curd and honey in the sun. There followed a distressing period of discomfort whilst Lok and Sarita cast healing spells over me, one of which I recall, involved passing seven grains of rice three times around

my head and then feeding them to me one at a time! I felt better next morning, so it must have worked - or might that have been the hot water bottle, cosy yak wool blanket and sick bucket provided by the rather more practically minded rest house keeper? Either way, the following day I was able to join the others on the hike up to Kyanjin Ri, the high point of the whole walk, with spectacular views all round to Langtang Lirung, Fluted Peak and best of all, a glimpse over the border into Tibet and the magnificent sight, from the closest I've ever been to an 8,000er, of Shisha Pangma (8,027m). (below)

All that now remained was to do it all again in reverse, with many more pleasant encounters on the way down to the car at Syabru Bensi, spend a last few precious days with Ian and Sarita in Kathmandu, before a final night in Delhi at a pleasant, affordable hotel in the centre, off Connaught Square (really a circle!) and then fly back home.

Martin

USEFUL LINKS:
www.welcomenepal.com
www.canepal.org.uk
www.himalayanstoveproject.org
www.offthewalltrekking.com



Barbecue and Snail Shell Crag

is the weirdest collection of words you're ever likely to see again in a single sentence . . . so make the most of it while you can!

To the dozen hardy souls who showed up for Dave Hicks's July intro meet at Stair though, it all makes perfect sense.

Things began on the Friday evening with - according to Geoff's report - 'fluffy clouds chasing gaily around the blue sky' Ahh, bless! He was then at pains to describe the excrement he'd scraped off the window ledges, the tone darkening ominously with tales of 'a territorial crow pecking at its mirror image' and apparently, becoming much too agitated to hold it all in.

This is not untypical of how Geoff's reports hang together, but the editor relishes making sense of it all, and loves Edgar Allan Poe too much to leave that bit out.

After dining royally and supping frugally at the Swinny - or maybe it was the other way round - it looked like Saturday would start off wet. But the weather picked up, and while the walkers set off to Buttermere for a stroll around the lake and an ascent of Haystacks, the climbers headed north east to Mosedale in the Carrock Fell area.

By now the weather was kinder, though the approach to Snail Shell Crag involved a tricky ascent along the edge of steep scree. They had the sunny, sheltered crag to themselves and were soon knocking off routes left, right & centre.

According to Geoff, who paired with Matt to bag an impressive seven routes, everyone thoroughly enjoyed climbing on this relatively under-visited crag, with a good spread of generally easier grades and best of all, on 'wonderfully-grippy gabbro'.



WHO WAS THERE?

CLIMBERS: Dave Hicks, Karen Purves, Matt Reed, Martin Dale, Joanne Leadbetter, Tony Hulme, Becky Hicks and Geoff Brindle.

WALKERS: John & June Wiseman, Christine Fry, and Karen's daughter Hannah Ashwin.

An impromptu recital by Martin on the fart-o-phone threatened to spoil things though (they don't write tunes like that any more) but an unperturbed Geoff continued to munch his pilchard butties and watched the local farmers toiling down below to bring in the silage. He mentions gossiping stonechats, a dragon fly drifting around the crag and even a visit from a lone Peregrine.

But enough of all this bucolic BS! What about all the routes climbed that day? Geoff reckons that from left to right they were: *The Scoop MS/The Gully M+/Slabs Left D+ /Recess Route D+ (plus Right D+ and Direct S**)/Rose Tree Route VD/Barker's Slab VD/ Barker's Slab direct VS**/Right Crack VD/North Climb MS plus other variations as well.* Now that's more like it!

After a 'disappointing pint' at the Old Mill pub near Mungrisdale, the climbers headed back to base, and joined the walkers to prepare for the feast ahead. By now, the weather looked like it could put a dampener on things so Mr. Hicks and his team erected a tarpaulin over the barbecue and soon the hut was full of smoke and alcoholic fumes, with music to cheer things on.



It was a right good do, and a tribute to the Barbecueuary and culinary skills of the hosts.

With full bellies, enough booze to float a boat, and once one (who really should remain nameless) had been helped to his bed, the evening drew to a satisfying close.



Unfortunately it rained overnight, so Sunday began a bit grey and grizzly - a good time to clear things up from the night before. Soon enough though, the sun was out and by mid-day, it was time to either head for the hills . . . or for those rather the worse for wear, to head for home!

Fab Four take a break in sunny Calpe

‘... if you can find a cheap flight and sensible car hire, you can enjoy a great value, exciting experience exploring the hinterland of Calpe’

By starting off with Geoff Brindle’s concluding words from his wonderfully detailed record of the springtime adventures of four club members in an around Calpe this April, the editor must admit defeat and apologise to Geoff for not being up to the task of squeezing everything in from the five beautifully observed pages that he submitted for publication.

So what follows is more of a hatchet job than the editor is completely comfortable with and it’s to be hoped that the essence of the occasion has not become entirely lost along the way.

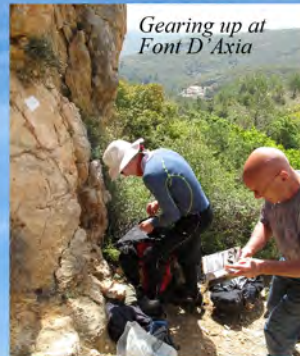
The starring characters in our story are Andy Dunhill, Chris Thistlethwaite, Geoff Brindle and Tommy Knowles, and after stocking up at the Masymas supermarket (More & More in English) the four of them arrived at their splendid three bedroom bungalow base late on Sunday night.

That’s when the first of two weeks worth of mouth-wateringly wonderful veggie dishes were whisked into the world by chef Andy, aka. Ginger Mullah, Gramps & Uncle Andy, and when the first of many alcoholic beverage tasting notes first loomed large in Geoff’s report.

Monday was devoted to a visit to Alcalali, in the Liber Valley where Gramps & Chris took to the rock while Tom & Geoff headed up to the sleepy hilltop village of Parcent, which Geoff had failed to reach on an earlier visit, despite the goal being in clear view (tracks petering out into ‘impenetrable bamboo thicket’ or some other excuse). So this time it was the road that got them there and ‘vague paths & obscure tracks’ that got them back to Alcalali, where, finding their favourite bar shut, they endured ‘pretty poor’ lager at a bar opposite the church before heading back to base.

Before we go any further, we’d better get the rest of the aka stuff out of the way: Chris is aka X or Xopher Thinsulate. Tommy moonlights as Toronto Tom or The Donkey Lasher and Geoff lays claim to the monikers Salivadorable Darling and Stud Raunchley. The editor, who knows less than nowt about the club’s arcane naming rituals, includes all this bollocks without comment!

Meanwhile, another day dawns in Calpe and the lads head for Toix. Ginger Mullah and Xopher ‘polishing some low grade routes’ while Lasher and Stud ‘engineer an unarmed attack on The Castellet De Calpe - using ancient fixed ropes’.



Gearing up at Font D’Axia

Tuesday began with a raiding party heading for Lidl and its booze prices that we can only dream of back home. Then it was back to the Lliber Valley, but this time, heading for the pleasant setting of the Font D’Axia crag. All four managed to climb and then Geoff set off

on a circular around the head of the valley, arriving back at the crag spot on time to head back to base and Andy’s potato-based ‘veritable cornucopia of veggieness’ washed down with an indifferent Lidl crianza that didn’t quite suit ‘Tom’s subtle palate’ so had to be finished off by a less-discerning Geoff.



Ominous looking skies near Abdet

Thursday already & the weather in Guadalest and Abdet did its worst, before relenting long enough to allow Gramps & Mr Thinsulate to explore the newer section of the Abdet crag to the west, while Stud & Lasher wandered up the valley to Confrides through impressive terrain of high rocky mountains and steep-sided valleys.

continues overleaf

Andy Dunhill on Tai Chi 6B+ Sierra Olta main crag with Calpe and the Peñón de Ifac below



Andy, Tom and Chris compete in an ill-judged fashion shoot at their Calpe base



and the winner is a fine figure of... whatever weird category this just happens to fall into

These fashionable shorts are also modelled on pages 22 & 30

Back at base there was some concern that Gramps and X's taste for sparkling water was throwing the task of alcoholic consumption rather unfairly onto Tom & Stud. However, they responded with their usual dogged enthusiasm.

Friday, and we're heading west of Puig Campana, the 1400m peak inland of Benidorm. Andy and Chris climbed on the crag about 4km from Sella, while the mapless walkers wandered quite a 'considerable distance along a well-maintained track' before wisely thinking better of it and heading back to Sella for a drink at the refugio and joining the climbing aces to explore the 'tightly packed hilltop village'.

According to Geoff's report, Andy 'went wild in the kitchen' that night, producing a veggie meal 'fit for a veggieburger king' washed down with an Elegido by one half of the party and more fizzy water than could possibly be wise by the other.

Come Saturday and Waitrose devotee Andy had by now quite taken to the charms of Herr Lidl's emporium and was stocking up as usual.

Ahead was a long drive to the crag at Bellus in the Albaida Valley where Andy and X were left to the tender mercies of the resident insects while the stalwart walkers followed the river to Xtavia. Along the way, beautiful aqueducts and miles of ancient ceramic piping testifying to the skill of the 14th century Moorish engineers.

Andy and Chris on the Bernia Ridge



Though it was hot and the river beckoned, Tom had read somewhere that the water here was home to alligators, so a dip was off the menu, and after a hot 14km of walking, they rejoined the climbers back at the waterfall.

A route along the justly famed Bernia Ridge was on the agenda for Sunday. The Lasher opted for a day off back at base, so just the three caballeros headed for the Bernia Sierra, and the same start that Dave Wood's party took last year.

But this time, the route was steeper and rather more challenging, through screes and huge boulder formations to a scramble, then a climb onto a ramp of rock heading up to the ridge and the most amazing panoramic view.

The ridge was then followed eastwards, surrounded by astonishing scenery, chatting with Norwegian walkers along the way and breaking for lunch at the highest point.

Although heading down was agony for Geoff, who's knee began to play up, they all agreed that this was a terrific place for walkers.

The adventure ended gazing at stunning views of the coastal area with a drink at a bar in the tiny village of Los Pinos.

A great day out!



Chris reckons it's worth checking what's lurking underneath your gear. This smooth snake at Sella isn't dangerous, but there's a venomous viper around that is!

Bollula Crag was Monday's chosen destination, gained via Altea La Vieja and then after passing through miles of orchards growing the sweet Loquat fruit, locally known as Nisperos.



On arriving at the crag, our walkers, as usual, left the climbers to their rock polishing, and set about exploring fascinating paths threading their way through the stunning terrain.

They headed east to the same general area on Tuesday as well, to the Echo Valley, and the rock face overlooking Polop. There they ran into Rich Mayfield from the nearby Orange House, running a climbing school on the crag. As ever, the walkers headed for the heights in wild and majestic surroundings. While Tom studied flora & fauna, Geoff climbed up to Col del Raco Ruig to appreciate the fine view over Benidorm, and they both had a nose around some of the abandoned properties in the area.

The pattern for the final few days in Calpe remained much the same - Uncle Andy and Xopher dispensing with a handful of climbs while Lasher and Stud explored the surrounding areas on foot. Inevitably, each day's activity would wind down in grand style over a veggie meal conjured up by Andy, liberally washed down with various cheap and cheerful beverages. Geoff reached the final pages of *The Quarry*, the last book from Iain Banks, which he recommends, they discovered that a five bedroom villa can be had for 1,000 Euros in the winter and that properties on the Altea Hills estate change hands for anything between half and three and half million Euros. Form an orderly queue please!

The crags at the top of the posh Altea Hills estate, about 4km from base, had to be visited and with estate security persuaded to let us in, Gramps and X soon had a few routes ticked off on Dalle d'Olla, taking care not to dislodge too much loose rock onto the posh cars and properties below, and then went on to tackle the imposing Altea Col crag higher up. Geoff meanwhile, went up to a higher col to enjoy a superb view into the next valley.



Chris on Dalle d'Olla

The penultimate day's climbing was on the crags at Guadalest with Geoff & Tom walking the valley eastwards from Gines, through citrus



groves, around the lake to Beniarda and the inevitable 'dos grandes' at a strategically placed roadside bar.

Tom, Geoff & Andy at the Guadalest Refugio

On the last day, the team were under orders from the editor to deliver a photo heroic enough to grace the title page of this Hot Rock report.

So, with Geoff's Canon at the ready, our star rock athlete and his awe-struck entourage, hair stylist and make-up artist arrived at the main crag at Olta to photograph the iconic 6B+ Tai Chi with the Mullah Maestro showing just how it's done.

Gramps played his part to perfection and even when he fell off (or 'slipped on a polished hold' as he later claimed) it didn't look rehearsed at all.

A fine end to a great trip!

Geoff's report has been edited down to fit the space available but its original five pages are still intact and can be accessed simply by emailing the editor



ULTRA Cool Kintail

report from Darren Hartley



Thursday evening, and we we're heading north to Fort William. Our special-offer at the Travelodge meant a comfortable night ahead, so after a few quickly quaffed pints in the Wetherspoons directly below, we got our heads down ready for an early morning start

Soon we were winding our way towards Kintail, skirting lochs reflecting the majestic highland scene of snow covered peaks, reminding us of why we make the effort to travel this far north.

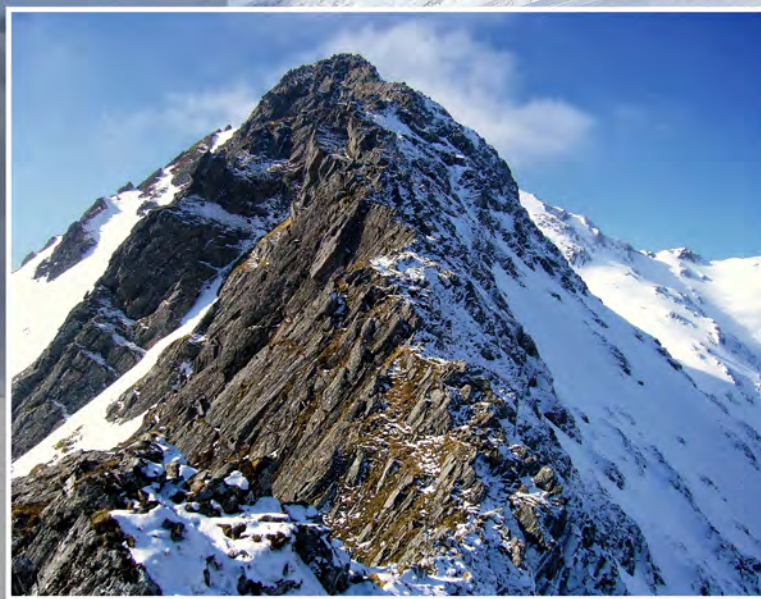
We arrived at a small lay-by on the A87 just before Cluanie Inn and after gearing up, headed steeply up a vague track on the southern flanks of A'Chralaig. Hard going, until we eventually broke out onto the southern ridge above the snow line and continued along it to the first summit at 1,051m.

From here, the view *(above)* was spectacular - a graceful cornice furnishing the curved ridge leading up to the main summit at 1,129m.

After a quick stop to refuel and don crampons, we set off, bound for the Munro summit of Mullach Fraoch-choire and its promise of a scramble.

On the way, we met a solo walker who'd decided to back off, but we all made it across the exposed section without too much of a fuss and the summit revealed grand views of neighbouring peaks and *(top right)* the long trench of Glen Affric.

We were pleasantly surprised by how much snow there was around. Although Spring had already taken hold on the south-facing slopes, the northern flanks, buried under deep snow, were still very much locked in the grip of winter.



The way down continued North West along the ridge, after which we turned South West into Coire Odhar. After an initial desperate boulder field we soon found a continuous runnel of snow which provided a swift and pleasant descent to the valley floor with nothing more than a 5k yomp to get us back to the car.

Our doss for the weekend was at Kintail Lodge, with its hotel rooms and bunkhouses, located at the head of Loch Duich.

Some of us were staying in the 'Wee' Bunkhouse. Aptly named we thought, because up until then we'd assumed it was the hotel's outside toilet block!

Saturday was another cracker as we set off for the Forcan Ridge. But then, at the parking lay-by? Oops!! Where the hell's my Montane Extreme Smock? Where else but back at the bunkhouse of course! Lucky for me, Chris Bell kindly obliged and ran me back to collect my favourite bit of winter kit. So that's another pint I owe him!

An excellent steep path allows quick progress and lands you at a high col from where the fine alpine-looking Forcan Ridge is revealed in all its splendour *(above left)*. We were soon well established on the ridge *(above right)* - never too desperate, but exciting enough to keep you focused.

continues overleaf



Looking back along the ridge to A'Chralaig

Just as things were starting to ease, our ridge came to an abrupt end. Looking onwards, a big drop with abseil gear in-situ was evident, but it seemed a shame to have to gear up.

So we took a quick look around and there it was - an obvious detour heading down a short gully on the left. The ridge then continued to a minor summit linked to the main one by a narrow snow arête.

The usual way off is to descend to the south east coire and aim for the Bealach Coire Mhalagain. However, we decided to head down the very wintry looking, initially steep northern slopes, making directly for the Bealach Na Craobhe and the fine path that took us back to the car.

An excellent mountaineering day finishing with beer and medals all round back at the lodge!

WHO WAS THERE?

Chris Bell, Alan Blackburn
Mark Boden, Adrian Clifford
Barrie Crook, Kevan Ebbrell
Mike Howe, Matt Reed
and Darren Hartley

We were looking for a short day on Sunday so headed over to Loch Quoich and completed the round of Sgurr Coire nan Eiricheallach and Sgurr A'Mhaoraich, which turned out to be yet another great day for us.

Thanks go to Chris Bell for organising everything, including booking the great weather. If only all Scottish meets were as successful as this!

Darren

Gearing up for the Forcan Ridge



BLASTS from the PAST

Andy Dunhill

Four whole decades ago, mere youths Martin Dale, Mick Tolley, John Stockton & Andy Dunhill were getting up to hairy, manly stuff at Malham

A Day at Malham

Martin, Mick, John (Mick's brother in law) and myself set off one Saturday morning for Malham. A brew in the cafe to let the rock warm up and then the mud track up to the right wing of the cove. Martin and John did Clubfoot - M.V.S., John fell off, the first of many that day. Meanwhile Lurch arrived. Mick and myself did Kirby wall V.S., Lurch tried it but he couldn't do it. His excuse was that two of his fingers were bandaged together - so he left for the pub amidst his usual utterances.

Martin and John then did Kilyn and two other V.S., John leaving the rock on each route. Mick and myself did Wambat, a hard H.V.S. The crux pitch is 60' and becomes progressively more strenuous. I led it, just, and Mick had his perennial problems. After many 'pull, pull' or 'its strenuous' and some well practised winching tactics Mick flaunted his body on the flat ground at the top. A brew and then back to the boring Blue Room.

while 60 years back, grub pilferers & drink spikers were causing

all kinds of havoc in Langdale, and shortly before the Little Langdale hut was bought, a reminder of the accommodation problems faced by our members back in 1955

ODDS AND BODS: Will the member who "flogged" the Secretary's tin of beans from the club hut and wrote "ta" on the lid, please forward 8d to the Treasurer in aid of the club hut fund. Alan Bell's hangover at New Year was due to some "knock-out" drops quietly administered by a member - he still qualifies to join the elite "bevymoppers" in spite of infringements. That grand set of gentlemen the National "Scivers" Association have now lost their "headquarters" at Wall-End barn but "Chaulighter" Shecklemyers states that they have left behind their heraldic shield bearing the inscription "Eat all, sup all, pay nowt". Perhaps one of them will collect it the next time he is passing.

FAST-FORWARD TO 2015..

... and it's that time of year when the club bids for a slice of our hard-earned cash.

Yep! Subs are due on October 1st so maybe it's as good a time as any to remind ourselves of just what we gain from being members of the FMC.

Well, for a start, all around us, there's the support, experience, goodwill and company of our fellow members, and it's there for the asking on meets and at our wide range of social events alike.

This is without doubt one of the friendliest of clubs and the willingness of our more seasoned members to share their experience of mountains and to help others develop the skills required to enjoy them safely, is second to none.

And then there's the little matter of our two superbly located club huts and the huge amenity they provide.

Highly regarded by groups visiting them, they are of course there for us to use as well, and at £3 a night, they deliver absolutely incredible value.

Our Facebook presence continues to amuse and inform and is quietly spreading the glue that's helping to keep us together as a group.

Finally there's our affiliation to the BMC, to which we contribute a fair chunk of our subs. It delivers so many benefits that we don't have space to list them all here, but you can check for yourself below.

Less than 60p a week is all it costs to be a member and it could easily finish up far less than that!

Just ask club secretary Rob Lewis. Earlier on in the year, he bought a new jacket from a dealer offering club discount, and saved every penny of his subs!

www.thebmc.co.uk/the-benefits-of-affiliating-to-the-bmc

Meet Miscellany

or 'THE ONES THAT NEARLY GOT AWAY'

A numbers tot-up of this year's club meets is a job the editor gladly leaves to those who like that kind of thing. Let's just say, with official meets as well as spur of the moment stuff, there was a lot going on and it's a pity that not all those outings could make it onto the pages of our magazine. What's for sure though is that every one of those that didn't get into print, was certain to have been special to members who were there, so by way of compensation, here's a rather less-than-complete pictorial round-up to remind us of how much fun we've been having.



There were plenty of forays onto grit, like here at Stanage,



and at Thom Crag (left) and Denham Quarry (right), while rush hour at Giggleswick south crag (below) provided a bit of limestone to get stuck into . . . if not always onto!



The Roaches,



All of the pictures you see above were nicked by the editor from members' posts on Facebook. The Roaches photo from Simon Fenna features the assembled might of Terry Robinson, Nick Hepburn, Steve Wrigley and Pete Stridgeon with sock-sniffing Martin Dale hiding under the tea cosy. The Thorn Crag photo, by Terry Robinson, shows Steve Wrigley grappling with *The Fireman's Slippery Pole* while Tony Hulme struggles on Martin Dale's *Raging Horn*. The photo of Matt Reed at Denham and those taken at Stanage & Giggleswick are by the ever-prolific Martin Bennett.

Even though new faces were thin on the ground, hut-based intro meets were well attended. On the Little Langdale meet, Route 2 (HS) on Walthwaite Raven Crag (below left) was a doddle to get to. Serendipity (S) on Kettle Crag (below right) on Pike O'Blisco involved a trickier approach . . . but intro stalwart Joanne Leadbetter reckoned it was worth it!



Huffing and puffing along behind, the editor was less impressed, especially when his beloved Fuji got trashed by a can of Red Bull exploding inside his camera bag!

A week later, and across the valley, Crystal [E1 5b] on Gimmer attracted Nick Hepburn, Peter Stridgeon & Martin Bennett who took the pics, and who, in February at Denham (below) took the lead on Concave Wall [S 4a] half a century after he first managed it!



photos: Matt Reed



This season's clean-up at Ousel's Nest means that outings here are now a lot less horticultural than they used to be and members have tackled routes and bouldering problems across the grades.



photo: Martin Bennett

Those preferring feet on terra-firm-as-possible have managed to schedule fair weather for their evening walks, invariably winding up at welcoming hosteleries carefully chosen by walk leaders desperately keen not to get lynched, Mr Chairman!



Cromwell's Bridge over the Hodder visited on Mike Howe's Hurst Green circular. Happy group (right) on Darren Hartley's Pendle Hill stroll (before discovering that the pub was closed) and three of them on the way down to the bitter disappointment that awaited!



(photos: Pete Smith)

And finally, Mr Dale's typically pointless insistence on attaining maximum altitude at Lord's Seat on John Wiseman's Whitbarrow walk.

Dave Hicks's intro meet at Stair has page nine all to itself!



Towards the end of a fine June evening from Whitbarrow - on a walk led by John Wiseman, who also took the photos.

report by John Wiseman



The annual photo competition is an opportunity for members to show what they have captured from club meets, and their own holidays, during the previous year.

Usually we've had a judge, and the event had become repetitive, so I 'volunteered' to try an experimental democratic format.

The audience were asked to choose their top four in order with 4 points awarded for a first choice, 3 for a second choice 2 for a third and 1 for a fourth.

Twenty two people took part in the voting, while some of the audience could not decide and sneaked away to the bar without handing in their votes.

After hectic adding up, the results were announced:

The landscape section attracted 47 entries and the winner was Roy Turner for his early morning photograph of Little Langdale.



LANDSCAPE

Second was John Wiseman with this picture of Glen Affric taken last November



LANDSCAPE

This view of Blackstone Edge by Tony Hulme came a worthy third.

Among the runners-up: another by Tony, of Haweswater and from Roy, a moody black and white of the Langdale Pikes plus two from Dave Wood: one of this inversion on Harrison Stickle that the editor



also took a fancy to and chose it for the cover of this issue of the club magazine, and the other, of a cloud bank approaching Skye.

These well-received runners-up, can all be found on our website.

Which is where you can look for the 4 runners-up in the ACTION category as well: another from Adrian Clifford on Harrison's Direct,

Angelzarke with Tony Hulme from Dave Hicks, Matt Reed's at Stanage with Liam Gaston and Dave Wood's of Martin Dale in Sea Cave, Calpe.

ACTION



Out of 35 entries, Adrian Clifford's Harrison's Climb Direct IV on the Ben emerged the winner while Dave Wood's study in concentration of Andy Dunhill in Spain came second and his [study in desperation?] of Martin Dale on Wilton One was third.



This was decided by 'Audience Reaction' on a scale from a weary groan to side-splitting hilarity requiring urgent medical attention.

Neither was achieved but the winner, decided on a show of hands - and only after seeing a close up of the relevant bits - was from Steve Longworth, of Martin Dale intimately checking out a fine piece of Spanish municipal sculpture.



What we now need is a picture, taken next year by Martin, of Steve trying it on with a real, live bull!

Second most chuckle-worthy was taken by Martin himself, just before last year's club

dinner - a knotty problem that many tried to solve for this hapless reveler.



Which left Chris Fry's picture of Andy Dunhill on a Stair working weekend to raise a titter or two and grab third place.

At the end of the evening I suggested that next year we might go back to having a judge, but then someone shouted out WHY??

John



late but not forgotten: Club Dinner 2014 from Steve Longworth

For the third successive year, the club was welcomed back to the Skiddaw Hotel for our Annual Dinner and we were treated to the same excellent hospitality that we'd previously enjoyed.

In fact the evening proved to be yet another sparkling event with a further increase in attendance of both young and old.

It was great to see Alan and Christine Bell return after their absence due to illness last year.

Once again we were delighted to hear from Alan, regaling us with tales of early club life and reminding us that it's now the time for our younger members to carry on in the feisty, go-ahead spirit of the club with new, exciting adventures of their own.

Trophy awards proved to be as hilarious as ever with, in particular, so many entries for **Mug of the Year** that we just couldn't find room to list them all here.

The Mug itself eventually passed from our esteemed treasurer - and we hope it's no reflection on his book-keeping abilities - to its proud new owner, Barrie Crook, whose countless strenuous efforts throughout the year to guarantee that the trophy would be heading his way, was an entirely worthy winner. Well done Barrie!!

Next up was our **Lush of the Year** award, previously held by Matt Reed who, despite a determined series of attempts to hang onto the trophy, was forced to pass it on to a thoroughly deserving Karen Purves.

Congratulations Karen and you must have relished - as did we all - Matt's ludicrously desperate last-minute bid as he handed it over to you, clearly plastered and hanging onto an almost empty bottle of wine. It was a persuasive performance from a bitterly disappointed Matt, but you Karen had been limbering up for this since last year's dinner, so the award was not only well-deserved, it was also wonderfully well-earned!

We all look forward to next year and yet another keenly-contested LOTY trophy.

Trophies for the Fell Race were also presented. Once the handicap ups & downs had been accounted for, Kevan Ebbrell was



Our 2015 Annual Dinner is back in the Fylde at The Villa, Wrea Green on November 28th

It's a golden opportunity for even more of us to attend what's surely the friendliest social highlight of the FMC year. By as many as possible of us being there and joining in the fun, our Annual Dinner will continue to be as memorable and unmissable as ever.

declared the overall winner on his lucky-thirteenth appearance, while Hal Rzadkiewicz, the fastest woman, came second and Martin Dale bagged third.



It was great to hear from our Chairman that the club continues to be in good shape and that membership numbers remain quite stable. Although many clubs are having a tough time finding new members, Darren reported that we're bucking the trend and continue to attract new blood.

He noted the interesting and varied nature of the syllabus, with so much lively input from members who continue to create and run events for the benefit of us all.

He especially thanked members for their sterling official & unofficial work helping make sure that the club continues to be as vibrant and active as it now certainly is.

Steve



photos: Steve Longworth & Chris Fry

Climb, Beer
 Eat, More Beer
 Sleep! Climb
 Beer, Eat, More
 Beer, Sleep!
 Climb, Ice Cream
 Beer, Eat
 More Beer
 Sleep!!

HOT ROCK intro on KALYMNOS

with
 Joanne Leadbetter



You get the picture?

As an intro, accompanied by nine other club members, this was my first taste of a Hot Rock trip

Our first day was spent travelling to Kos where we had a very relaxing overnight stay in a luxury hotel (it was a special deal) and a whisper in my ear from Woody, "Don't expect the Afroditi to be as good as this!"

After an All-You-Can-Eat breakfast we took a pleasant boat trip to Kalymnos. Even Terry and Claire, neither of whom do boats well, managed to keep their brekkies down!

Taxi ride to the hotel, bags dumped, then it was ropes and gear out for our first venture onto the crags at Poets. Among the routes we climbed were *Il Gino 5b*, *Mustass 5c*, *NYPPA 6b* and, with encouragement from Woody and Martin, I climbed *MAO*, a *5c+* on the right wall . . . which for a first day, wasn't too bad at all!



Me on MAO

Après climb was at the famous Gelateria Artigianale Italiana where the owners, Daniela & Nicoletta, welcomed Chris, Martin, Woody & Hal like long lost relatives, his 'Thank you very muuuch' a happy reminder of previous visits . . . and those ice creams . . . are to die for!



With so many tavernas in such a small area, we couldn't go far wrong in getting a cheap, tasty meal each night. Terry managed to find a different fish for every meal, in fact, I'm sure he's started to grow gills!

Pre-dinner Mythos were enjoyed at Fatolitis where George welcomed us with open arms.



(ed: very nice, but who's welcoming who exactly?)



Me revving up with Telendos island behind

Scooters being the favourite way of getting around for most climbers, the lads were off on the second day to do the hiring. Bike virgins John and Claire were apprehensive but John's scooter only fell over once, and luckily, he wasn't on it at the time. Come the end of the week though, they'd decided that if they visit Kalymnos again, they'll hire a car.

Our routine was much the same for the rest of the week - tackling some great routes at **Summertime**, such as: *Assos 5a*, *Til Tanit 5b+* and *Orea Dana 6a+* among others



Terry at Summertime

At **Arhi**, it was a particularly scorching day, at one point, forcing some of us to shelter in the cave! Mad dogs and Englishmen eh? Routes climbed here were *Argonauti 5b+*, *Europa 6a+* and quite a few others too.



Arhi Crag

To cool down after all that hot sweaty stuff, a few of us braved the quite cool sea for a dip at **Sea Breeze**. Mr Dale hadn't brought any kind of cozzie with him so he improvised with his Asda undies. David Gandy eat your heart out! And one - who shall remain nameless - decided to have an OAP nap at the table instead.

We also got to **Kastelli** where 9 of us did several routes including *Gikas 4c* & *Gyzis 5b*. I belayed Martin on *Pillar of the Sea 6a*, while Hal, climbing well, led *Pampachoum 6a+* and *Merci Brothers 6a*. Unfortunately Woody wasn't feeling too good that day so took to his room for a siesta.

Thursday was 'Rest' or 'Do What You Want Day'.

Martin and I scooted around the whole island - easily done in a few hours. We lunched at the port of Pothia, had an afternoon coffee at Vathy and a bit of a paddle at Emporios.



Friday, another scorcher, saw us on **Afternoon**, a very busy crag where we ticked off *Insomnia 5c*, *Janas Kitchen 6b* and *Tsopanakos 6a+* and in between belaying, I had fun keeping a hungry old goat off our packed lunches. And no, I don't mean Martin!

Saturday, the whole gang headed out to the furthest crag of the week, **Palionisos Bay**. (below)



Some sections of this scooter ride would put anyone off - never mind John & Claire - and especially so when taverna owners, desperate for our custom, took to jumping out in front of us as we passed by!

continues overleaf >

Some of us also went on to the new crag at Paradise Beach to try out new routes and a couple of us had our final swim of the holiday



(above) Hal at Poets on MAO. John behind on Oyzo (5c+)
(below left) John and Becky on 5c/6a routes at Poets
(below right) Woody on Happiness (6c) at Ivory Tower

Martin and Tony tackling Wiesel (6b+) at sector Beach, Palionisos

WHO WAS THERE?

in no particular order of cuteness, competence, or cash handed over:

Tony Hulme, Becky Hicks, Martin Dale, Joanne Leadbetter, Chris Thistlethwaite, Dave Wood, Terry Robinson, Hal Rzadkiewicz, Claire Addy, John Hickman

For our final evening meal, Woody decided it'd be nice to go back and say farewell to Maria, another very friendly Kalyrnian, at Babayiannis.

Chris and I were on the Retsina by then, and what with the afternoon Mythos at the Gelateria and complimentary Ouzo from Maria, I was soon well on my way for a messy end to the night. It was about then that I managed to convince Martin that we absolutely *had* to visit the Scorpion Rock Bar, spotted earlier in the week, so with 'mushing' music in the

background, and JD and coke in hand, I was in my element.

The only trouble was that by then, the rest of them had sneaked off to bed!



Claire with small Mythos at Babayiannis Taverna

The gang, minus me taking the photo, at Zorba's Taverna



Hal, and Woody, who by now was feeling a lot better, came to meet us there and did the same two routes, while Tony & Becky went back to **Poets** where *Styx 6a+* was bagged.

Then, one last visit to the Gelateria with promises to return, 'Thank you very muuuch', farewells to the Afroditi staff . . and to Hal and Woody who were staying on for another week.

And that was it! By the time we boarded our ferry off the island, a beautiful day had turned to black clouds and, to Terry & Claire's dismay, a choppy sea. Thunderstorms, lightning and pelting rain then followed us all the way back to welcome shelter on Kos.

It may have been a bleak send-off but it was a very happy, if tired group of climbers that landed back in Blighty in the early hours of Monday morning. And guess what my very last thought was as my head hit the pillow back home . . .

Tony, Chris, Terry, Claire, Becky & John at Fatolitis Bar



Our last day! Where has the week gone? Terry, Chris, John & Claire ventured over to explore Telendos, the little island opposite, while Martin and I went to **Iannis Crag** where, maybe a bit the worse for wear, I belayed him on *Yaka 6b* and *Kalyne 6b*.

Can't wait for TONY'S TOURS 2016

of course!

Joanne

photos from Jo's camera & also by Dave Wood etc



NOT VERY MANY HANDS make light work at Little Langdale



When new custodians Andy and Liz Hird arrived for their first Working Weekend, the only volunteer they found panting on the doorstep like an over-excited spaniel, was the relatively useless editor of this magazine.

This was not a good start and why, there and then, they didn't just turn tail and head back home is still a mystery. Maybe it was having the family in tow - Jessie and Eddie - that persuaded them to stay, so it was GAME ON! . . .

. . . starting with a weirdly Top Gearish, toys-for-boys thing when Andy unloaded his new monster strimmer and he and Eddie began to furiously attack the long grass out front. Once finished though, they soon lost interest.

Nature's alarm clock, a whopping great thunder storm, awoke everyone at 6.30 next morning and in no time, after an early breakfast, a couple of new lights were installed in the loos, Eddie had a first coat of white on the walls in the big loo and new riser rails were fitted in the showers. In the kitchen, Liz had soon discovered that Jessie was just the right size for the job of cleaning the tiles, while she tackled the oven and generally made sure everything was nicely spick and span again.

Our very own landscape gardener, Mark Bowden, arrived late morning, and he was *not* for messing around! Before long he'd completely felled all the overhanging branches out back and, with Eddie's help, fashioned the foliage into a splendid fence, before applying weed killer, liberally but sensitively, to keep things under control for the future.

Liz spirited up a tasty lunch just as, with perfect timing, former hut custodian Chris Bell showed up. He splashed a bit of paint around though and put on a decent enough show while Andy fitted three brand-new mirrors in the washroom.

Liz's pulled pork evening meal was eagerly wolfed down and all that remained on Sunday was to give the place a through cleaning. There's still stuff to do though, so stand by for another Working Weekend sometime soon, for a bit of external painting!



It's the chimney next!



CLIVE'S TASTY PIE MEET TRIUMPH



Already something of a fixture in the club's spring calendar, the delights of Clive Bell's tasty weekend moved decisively on from last year's highly praised Bangers & Mash to a scrumptiously creamy fish pie, packed - to the gills - with delicious prawns, cod and salmon.

But the pie - with veg on the side - was just the main course. Beforehand we were treated to canapés and melon and ham starter. A yummy pud followed, with cheese and biscuits rounding things off.

There may have been the odd bottle or two hanging around (below) but they were bested by the lashings of moreish mulled wine that Clive and his team plied us with throughout the evening.

Fortunately, it ran out before things got rowdy, and we all went to bed well-satisfied.

Thanks to Chef de Cuisine Clive of course, but this was a team effort made possible only with the help of kitchen elves: Jenny Tolley, Cherry Earle, Kevan Ebbrell & Clive's grandson, Ben Cunningham. Our thanks to them as well!



HEY-UP! It's best bib & tucker next year. March 19th is POSH NOSH NIGHT!



Martin D was tasked with cleaning the toilets and since he's the one who spends more time on his throne in there than anyone else, we all had to agree it was only fair



The main job in the garden was to replace six fence posts that had rotted away. Stones that had fallen from the dry-stone wall were also replaced and the concrete base from under the old LPG cylinders was recycled into its structure. Lots of leaves were raked up and

heaved over into the wood, preventing them from rotting down in the parking area and encouraging weeds to grow.

The stream was cleared, loads of gunge dug out of the drain in the road just down from the main entrance and the whole area was generally spruced up.

If you have any ideas for improvements to the garden area please let me know.

A Fire Risk Assessment for the cottage was drafted by Dave Hicks & me and it's likely to result in more jobs going onto the 'to do' list.

We got everything sorted by Saturday, so on Sunday, most of us went for a walk in nice sunny and warm weather.

Food-wise: I provided soup and cake during the day, and as usual, a veggie main course on Saturday evening, with Joanne rounding things off nicely with a pudding.

My thanks to all those who helped.

I'm already accepting bookings for the next working weekend.

In fact I'm always willing to take bookings for them and I hope you'll find time to come and join us. I can promise that they're always a lot more fun than they sound.

Andy

Outdoor Gear Reviews

Love it or loathe it - tell us all about it

What I'm keen to print are reviews of outdoor gear that you just couldn't do without, as well as the stuff you couldn't get rid of fast enough.

Praise to the hills or stick the knife in to the hilt. I don't care! I'll print it warts and all, just so long as it's your honest opinion about gear you've actually checked out.

Like all good reviews though, it's best to finish off with a list of positive as well as negative points about the kit.

The price you paid is good info of course and if you got it from a dealer you can recommend, then tell us who it was.

If you've used or worn something for ages, and reckon it's still doing its job well, then why not share your enthusiasm for it? That way, you'll be helping others decide what's worth shelling out for.

Of course, in cases where whatever you bought turned out to be a steaming pile of ordure, we can all have a good laugh about your gullibility and make sure not to make the same mistake ourselves.

Either way, you'll be doing us all a favour, and grab bragging rights for impeccable judgment, while creatively fudging the issue wherever that judgment let you down.

Apropos bugger all, I've still got a half-pint Primus bought mail-order from Blacks in 1958 with money earned from a paper round and taking pop bottles back.

I won't lie to you and claim it was one of my favourite bits of gear though. It was more like an unexploded bomb threatening to take me and the tent with it. It nearly had my eyebrows off more than once, so it's just as well you can't get the paraffin any more and in any case, since I got my JetBoil, it's now under the stairs for good.

Pointless, rambling rant over . . . oh sod it! I've just spotted a spelling mistake on page 22! *Hapless* should read *hopeless*.

There's bound to be loads more, so enjoy finding them and crowing to me all about it.

C'ya all in January (if I make the deadline)

Roy



Your articles and reports for the magazine

We all have tales to tell and most of us crave an audience, preferably a sympathetic one. With this magazine, that's exactly what you've got . . . and it's begging for your stories!

That doesn't make producing an article or club event report any easier, but you can at least be sure that whatever you choose to write will be welcomed by readers who'll genuinely appreciate your efforts.

Articles from new members are welcome of course, but whatever level of experience you bring to your writing, here are a few tips for success that might be worth keeping in mind:

- Keep it light and informal, as though it's what you'd like to SAY rather than how you think it should be written.

Before sending stuff in for publication, please ask the editor for the 'How To' guide

- Don't worry about you're grammer, speling or layout . . . that's wot the editor's here for.
- Not everyone is in the know about who's who so it's wise to remember readers who 'weren't there' or are outside your immediate circle.
- Include pictures *separately* and with captions!
- It's fine to write 'in your own style', and provided you keep things nice and simple, you can be sure that your personal 'voice' will sing out loud and clear.

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*The Forcan Ridge
photo by Darren Hartley
from his Kintail report
on page 14*



www.fyldemountaineeringclub.org Membership enquiries: Dave Wood (woody2000@btinternet.com)

The Fylde Mountaineering Club
is affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council

