

THE FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

SPRING 2018



Meet reports galore, plus Mr D'Ale's Big 60th Bash, the Annual Dinner and a Family Meet Round-Up



contents

from the Editor

As we stagger from the gob-smacking turmoil of 2017 into a brand-new year of equally bewildering possibilities, I'm reminded of the awesome power that 'fake news' and 'alternative facts' can wield.

I wonder how much of this garbage has been swallowed by us so far, and how much more tripe 2018 holds in store for us.

In my quieter moments of reflection, often while out among the hills, I think to myself, sod it! Why should I care?

The world's gone mad but I'm alright Jack.

Then some silly sod decides it would be really cool to string up not one, but two zip wires over Thirlmere . . . and suddenly I'm back in the game, all hot under the collar, bristling with righteous indignation.

The very idea!! How dare they?

But hang on a mo. Wasn't it only last year, when your word-weary editor was hurtling zippy-style down to Bethesda in North Wales with - apart from 'am I about to die?' - not a single care in the world?

It's true that Bethesda is not without it's charms, limited though they may be, but surely to goodness Thirlmere is a Lakeland treasure in a league of it's own, is it not?

Well, its 'natural beauty' is largely man-made. Back in the late 19th century, building the dam at the north end flooded the valley, merging its two smaller lakes to create the Thirlmere reservoir we now seek to protect.

Objections were quashed in the 1879 Act of Parliament and I can't help wondering just how much fake news and how many alternative facts were peddled in that debate.

ZipWireWise, do I sound a tiny bit conflicted? Hypocrisy stinks, especially my own, but I can cope. On the other hand - provided it's not just another load of old porkies - the proposed Ultra Hi-Speed rail link to the Old DG?

I'm all for it!

Roy

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Our deadline for the AUTUMN issue is the end of July. Please email your words and photos to: arte.roy@gmail.com

from the Chairman

Now that Christmas is well out of the way, I'm sure you just can't wait to try out whatever outdoor goodies Santa had in his sack for you, and that you've already managed to burn off at least some of last year's festive excesses.

It's around that time of year when we reflect on our efforts and achievements from the past twelve months and look forward to whatever the next twelve might bring.

In our minds, we may have got round to compiling lists, or like me, may have written down our 2018's must do's ready for the warmer months ahead, whether it's more long walks, interesting scrambles, getting to grips with the rock and ice or joining in on the many social events our club organises.

It's great that we're able to tell our tales on Facebook or in meet reports and articles for the club magazine. Scrolling down the screen or as now, thumbing through these pages, we're reminded of just how many wonderful days of varied activities we're privileged to share and enjoy.

I am now nearing the end of my fifth year as Chairman and as I announced at our very successful Annual Dinner, I'll be stepping down at the February AGM for you to choose another of our members to take over at the helm.

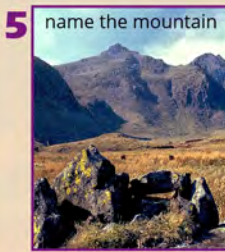
I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported me during my tenure and also to express that it has been both an honour and a pleasure.

Darren
January 12th 2018



Giddy with success at the December Social, the editor has decided to get in on the act with a picture quiz of his own devising. But don't get too excited. THERE ARE NO PRIZES!!

welcome to QUIZ CORNER



See if you can score 8 points - the answers are on page 6

a year in the life of
FAMILY MEETS
 from Mikala Tolley

Our year of Family Meets began in late January 2017.

We met at Stair cottage for a meet organised by the Robertses. We'd planned to walk up Barrow and Outerside. However, the weather was not kind to us; driving rain and sleet straight into the eyes lead to us calling off the walk and making a hasty retreat to the Coledale to dry out. That night we tucked into a Burn's feast of Haggis, Tatties and Nips. On the Sunday though, the weather was far nicer, so a shamble up Castle crags to clear the heads allowed us to finish the weekend nicely.

We didn't fare much better on the April meet led by the Humeses and it was beginning to feel like our Stair meets were cursed as illness led to a split in the pack. The healthy ones walked 10 miles up Cat Bells, High Spy and Maiden moor while us sickly souls went for a gentle meander around Derwentwater, winding up with a couple of hours in the Swinside.

You may see a theme developing here!

Sunday saw beautiful blue skies and a much livelier bunch setting off up Latrigg, with stunning views over Keswick, and meeting a fine gentleman celebrating his 50th circuit of the Wainwrights!

Things were much better for our September Meet. Led by the Robertses, again we were at Stair but the curse seemed to have lifted.

A walk - very, very up and very very down Haystacks ensued - but we'll leave them to tell you more about that! →

Our final meet of the year, led by us Tolleys, was in October and this time we were based at Little Langdale. We elected a valley walk from the cottage to the Old and New Dungeon Ghyll pubs (I did say there was a theme!)

We made up a fine contingent with ages ranging from 6 to 46. We expected tired legs - and not necessarily the children's - so we prepared for that by dropping off a vehicle at the pub car park.

It was a beautiful five-mile* walk through the valley and up over the tops. We passed waterfalls where plans were made to return in the summer for a spot of paddling. A well-earned pint was downed in the Old DG and an ice pack applied to a bruised knee and we returned to the cottage, via the Three Shires where we partook of our communal evening meal.

On the Sunday, after packing and cleaning, we headed over to Hodge Close, taking in a couple of rope swings and a dragon in a cave, on the way.

Over the year we've achieved much. The children have grown in stature, confidence and abilities. We've bagged Wainwrights, found geocaches, suffered one or two injuries, enjoyed some great socialising - not to mention, the odd pint or two!

** we think, with various tech giving different readings!*

Mikala



October

September is a weird time for families. Getting back to the school routine after the holidays can be tiring, so it's fantastic to have an opportunity to escape on a weekend Family Meet in the Lakes.

Our three families, the Humeses, Robertses and Tolleys gathered at Stair and we set off on Saturday for the south side of Buttermere, parking up at Gatesgarth Farm, ready to set off walking. Within 400m of the car though - just over Peggy's Bridge - our first casualty! Maisy's feet had grown and she was struggling with squashed toes. Fortunately, Mikala was on hand to administer kind words . . . and thinner socks!

With a beautiful view of High Crag and Robinson behind us, we headed up the path to Scarth Gap. When we stopped for lunch, Katie (the vegetarian) asked Mike (the meat leader!) if he'd remembered to switch on the slow cooker with the pulled pork in it Oh No! No meaty treats would be waiting for us when we got back to the hut. Still, we pressed on up to the pass until we got to the foot of the first scramble.

Most of the kids leapt over the rocks like mountain goats whilst a few of us older ones in the party looked on with some trepidation. Dan and Lucas scouted ahead though and assured us that the path was good . . . and the walkers coming down towards us confirmed that the path on the other side was much easier - we just had to get ourselves over the top!

Everyone made it, with some needing more encouragement than others. The view was amazing with glimpses of the south coast of Scotland exciting the kids. The rain started just as we reached the summit, which meant that conquest celebrations were short-lived. We dropped down over Green Crag and past Innominate Tarn, where Wainwright's ashes are scattered, and where a few wild campers were braving the September rains, and then onto the path down the side of Fleetwith Pike, which looked a lot easier from the other side of the valley!

There were a few slips and bumps on the way down, but no real injuries. Sol, Connie and Sophia led the whole way from the front with Lucas helping out, scouting ahead and, loving the outdoors, generally bouncing around. Even though she's only six, Lorelei managed the whole walk on her own and Maisy, who hated the look of the scrambles, was so proud of herself for getting to the top.

The kids did amazingly well!

The sun was setting as we dropped down to Warnscale Bottom but we made it back to the cars before dark and a quick pint in the Fish rounded off a great walk. We'd been ribbing Mike all day long on how to cook 2 kilos of pork shoulder in time for our meal but he salvaged some dignity by dashing to Booths and returning with burgers for the troop's dinner. We still have the pork in the freezer for the next meet.

It'll be well marinated by then!

Katie



January



April



September



October

Dinner is Served

as recollected by organiser & former Fell Race champion Tony Hulme

This year's dinner, attended by fifty-three of our members, saw us back at the Skiddaw for the second year in a row and yet again the service provided by the staff was excellent and, judging from comments on the night, so was the food - and I'm not the only one who would agree.

First speaker up was our Chairman, reminiscing on the great days out he's enjoyed with the club* and giving notice that he'd be standing down as Chairman at the forthcoming AGM.

Next, Mug of the Year - and you'll find this hard to believe - but it went to Karen Hicks. She may have run a close mug-race in the past but this was her first time to actually lift the trophy.

My advice for anyone needing to guarantee or avoid winning the award is: noble witnesses!

Lush of the Year went to Christine Fry, grabbing the trophy with her antics at last year's dinner, which leads me to ask: has no one else in our club managed to compromise themselves in alcohol related stupidity for a whole year - or is witness nobbling far more widespread than I thought?

Finally, it was my turn to announce the winners of the Fell Race. I may have mentioned before** that I'd previously won this prestigious award, but what I failed to convey at the time was just how much further and harder it was when I won it - an opinion based entirely on the fact it took me rather longer to get round the course.

Winners this year were Mark Broughton, Jen Chambers and Clive Bell, who's done it so often he's bound to know all the short cuts by now!

All in all then, it was a grand evening and I hope we can maintain attendance and continue to make our annual dinner a highlight of the year.

*Hey Darren, you don't escape that easily, and I'm sure there are many more great days in store for you. (Tony)

**may have mentioned?? Yeah, as in: impossible to shut you up about it! (Ed)

PICTURE QUIZ ANSWERS

1: Kelly Hall Tarn on Torver Back Common. 2a: Llyn Ogwen
2b: Llyn Idwall with Tryfan in between the two. 3: Patterdale
4: The 'Hand Traverse' on Corvus, Raven Crag, Glaramara and proof that even the editor could manage it. 5: Scafell Pike from Great Moss, Upper Eskdale. 6: Thirlmere Valley - before the dam was built. 7: Fionn Loch, Suilven beyond.



Blinds, Beds & Banter at Stair August **WORKING WEEKEND**

Well, there were only going to be five of us this weekend, and I was to be the only female! Would I be able to cope with four men, especially one who cracked a whip-we would see!

On my arrival at tea time the hut was empty, so after unpacking I proceeded to make my tea and relax. After chilling for what seemed a long time on my own, I began to wonder if the men were just leaving all to me-after all we women are much better at multitasking aren't we-ha!

Anyway, my thoughts eventually turned to liquid refreshment (as if), and I decided to venture to the pub! Just as I was almost ready Tom turned up - so I was to have company after all! Tom decided real ale was a good idea, so we ventured up to the Swinny. The pub has had alterations carried out - the bar has been moved and is bigger with more choice of real ales - good move! The old part of the pub remains, and I quite like the mix of the old with the new. After a few pints, we arrived back at base to find Andy had finally arrived!

Saturday morning dawned, and I got up to find John and Mike had already turned up! (No, I wasn't that late up-they set off early-really!) Anyway Andy cracked the whip and we all set to! Tom gave all the mattresses a good clean, while Andy gave both bathrooms a thorough scrubbing including showers and tiles. I started on the kitchen cleaning out all the cupboards, shelves etc.

John and Mike proceeded to start on the new blinds that had been bought for the lounge. This was not as easy as it seemed, and there was much measuring, sawing, cutting, and up and down the ladders, and of course the wood above the windows was crooked - ha! The blinds were fitted eventually and it was time for elevenses. Flapjacks, cake and brews were enjoyed amongst some cheeky banter!

Tom and Andy ventured into the garden then, where the weeds were sorted, grass cut and general tidying up of the grounds carried out with John helping. Tom suggested checking the drains - this was done and they were fine.

Gutters were cleared and Mike proceeded to put up a new fascia board with Andy's and John's help - this looks much better!

Andy made us a nice veggie meal-one he hadn't made before, and as he had asked me to do a pud I made plum crumble and custard to finish. Wine and beer accompanied the meal, and with more cheeky banter, a good night was had by all!

On Sunday the boys carried on with the jobs, and I finished off in the kitchen before we all headed off for home.

The hut and grounds are looking much better now and yes I did survive!

*Christine FryUp
August 2017*



PENDLE: THE SUMMIT CHALLENGE

They said it couldn't be done - and it took a man* on a mission to prove it couldn't be done - until now!

For several past years, FMC evening walkers have had a Pendle Walk to look forward to. Those embarked upon so far have delivered much enjoyment and laughter but it's a source of some frustration that not one of these evenings can be called an unqualified success! Not even close!!

There was The Treasurer's evening, a supposed mid-level traverse finishing up with a damp ending along unlikely paths, mobile phones used to read maps and as head torches and reaching the Swan with Two Necks to find it closed.

There was the Chairman's ascent from Chatburn with a long approach that members gradually turned off from, so that nobody actually got to the summit . . . and to cap it all, the pubs in Chatburn were closed.

*Then there was my own effort - me ready to set off from Sabden while everyone else was waiting at the Nick (this earned me a Mug of the Year award) and finally last year, a humble attempt for us all to reach Deerstones Crag, cruelly foiled by us losing Cherry Earle within the first half hour.

I was asked by our coordinator John Wiseman to lead a walk that would finally get to the summit and celebrate the great achievement in Pendleton at the Swan with Two Necks. Anyone perusing the Ordinance Survey map will quickly realise that Pendle covers quite a big area and that The Swan lies a long way from the summit overlooking Barley.

I took up the challenge and one summer afternoon I did an anticlockwise reconnoitre, walking delightfully thro' wild moorland surrounded by cotton grass with little brown birds singing. I repeated the route clockwise - and better, because I avoided disturbing a farmer and sheep dogs with it being as late as 10pm by then! So now, it was all decided; August 2nd would be a memorable day.

At its quickest, the walk would take 3.5 hours but we were to start at 7pm? IMPOSSIBLE! So, an email was sent out: 'we're starting a 6pm prompt, bring head torches, and no stragglers please or we'll probably be benighted in a bog!'

One or two members politely withdrew.

August 2nd arrived with contradictory forecasts, including rain more appropriate to the tropics than to NE Lancashire but at 5pm we had sunshine and our 'Pendle, the Summit Challenge' was well and truly on. Five cars arrived promptly at the cattle grid, 8 members got out and soon we were off at a brisk pace to Little Mearley Hall.

The ascent of Mearley Clough proved tough going and one of our members opted out, was given a map and wished the best of luck! Black clouds were approaching but the rest of us, recently reminded of the Dunkirk spirit, fought on upwards and still in sunshine, arrived at the Scout Cairn.

After a minimal rest we were off north eastwards along what is now a very wet path due to the invention of the Pendle Way - a waterlogged track about 10 feet wide.



Ominous black cloud was moving in from the southwest. So much for the 'good' BBC Clitheroe Weather forecast! Together we reached the summit cairn in a depressing mist.

It had taken 2.5 hours but Pendle was finally conquered en masse - and by a party classed as 'elderly': two ladies five men - including an honorary member.



Thoughts of returning through wild, undiscovered bogs were abandoned for fear of drowning and benightment, so there was no other option but a direct descent to the cars. The mist soon cleared revealing will-o'-the-wisp drifting across the moors in a beautiful pink light. The cloud effects were stunning with the late sun illuminating higher level cloud in a beautiful orange glow. It was quite mystical. Some stopped to take photographs.

The cars were reached in about 3.45 hours, not bad for a team of old folks, and 7.5 miles had been covered in very wet conditions underfoot. We were relieved to find our friend waiting in his car because we had dread of midnight searches and calling out the Rossendale mountain rescue!

And what about The Swan with Two Necks? Well, it was open . . . and a good time was had by all!

Barrie B Crook



A couple of people responded to my post on the social media place. One, an unlikely bedfellow, the other a seasoned campaigner returning from a long (for him) lay-off.

Imagine my surprise when Simon Fenna expressed an interest in the dark art of bouldering! Unheard of, but it seemed he wanted a day out and was up for it, whatever the weather. Mr *Unknown Stones* himself, Paul Clarke, was the other interested party. Paul, an ex member who keeps in touch, was recovering from shoulder surgery. He promised to show us some unknown stone and that he was 'as weak as a kitten'.

We arranged to meet up at Santa's Grotto, Stump Cross Cavern Cafe. Simon had brought his son's mate, James along for the ride. It wasn't a bad day weather wise but still not as sunny as promised. We found Clarke in the grotto with a rather slim looking Santa. We did fancy a bacon butty but settled for a brew as the prices were a little on the steep side. We were in Yorkshire lad! Paul had thought to take us to the crag up on the moor behind the cafe but it looked dark and foreboding. We needed some sun! So, off we went in the cars towards Pateley Bridge. Soon we pulled into the side of the road and then followed Paul across the moor towards some small bits of rock on the horizon. We wore the uniform of the boulderer: pads and woolly bobble hats!

The first crag was **Rowantree Edge** - a few small boulders forming a bit of an edge. The sun came out and warmed us. The rock however was a little on the greasy side. We warmed up and then tackled an interesting little crack involving that finest of techniques, jamming. The oracle advised us that it was about a grade 3 and called *Elm*. We huffed & we puffed and eventually Simon was successful. I followed but only after a bit of scuffling and blood drawn. James got a beginner's lesson in hand jamming but couldn't make it tell. Clarke had positioned the pads below a nice little arête. This was as good as it was going to get. Pretty clean and almost dry. The top was still a bit damp so we opted to jump off when the top was grabbed. *Dash*, as it is known, succumbed to the evergreen Clarke.

right: meet leader fighting the scrittle on Dash

Simon then got introduced to the scrittle but managed to clasp the top. James threw himself at it and for someone who hadn't really climbed outside before - and with borrowed boots - gave it a fairly good effort. I stepped out of bounds on my first attempt but scabbled my way to victory on the second.

We then moved on up the hill to the **Rowantree Tor**. This area was made up of a fallen *Brimham Rocks*-style pinnacle and a few other walls and edges. It was much dryer and the landings were better. A few interesting problems were ticked here. I managed to do *Violet*, a nice arête which only succumbed to a dodgy bit of pad folding giving me that extra inch or two of reach. I was pleasantly surprised to see Mr Clarke fail to make an ascent. He did give us a masterclass in heel hookery on the overhanging arête of the tor though. Weak as a kitten my arse! We could have stayed there longer as the Sun was sinking in the west, but we were promised another crag by our guide!

A little bit further down the road we pulled into the car park. A bit of a damp trek through the heather to a wall and then we dropped down to below a pristine couple of walls and a very green looking slab. This was **Far Crag**, (left) another fine little venue.



The slab looked good but was definitely out of condition. We padded out the base and set to. Superb quality grit with no scrittle and a good top out! We all managed numerous ways up the steep walls. Clarke, of course ticked the central tough line while we floundered in the master's wake. Simon got the hold but couldn't hold it and I pulled a flapper. The light was fading so it was time to fold up those pads, adjust the woolly hats and head on out across the soggy moor.

In the pub we reflected on a great afternoon's bit of sport whilst sat in front of a roaring fire, clutching pints of sadly not Yorkshire ale. Ah well, at least the snacks were tremendous.

My thanks to my fellow boulderers, Paul Clarke, Simon Fenna & James for a grand day out.

Martin



Postscript - you may or may not be aware that while unpacking my car in the car park back at Preston, my nodding dog Rex made a bid for freedom, hiding away in Simon's boot. Thankfully, after some dodgy social media shenanigans, Rex is back resplendent on my parcel shelf.



FIVE GO MAD for the climbing & walking IN DORSET

as reported by one of the five. Chris Thistlethwaite

It was on Bank Holiday, Saturday 26th August that our meet leader, Andy Dunhill, drove Tom Knowles and me the eight-hour journey down to Glen Park Caravan site at Easton, roughly in the middle of Portland.

There we met up with Nick Dalzell and his pal Mick Johnson. They'd set off the day before and had already managed to squeeze in a few routes just a ten minute walk from the site.



The main aim of the Portland meet was to get some climbing done and although I was looking forward to heading down there, the area's reputation made me more than a bit apprehensive about how I'd cope. It's a good job that I didn't have high expectations as I found everything HARD. By the end of the week I'd climbed only two routes clean and they were on the blunt end of a fairly tight rope. The polish on the easier and more popular routes didn't help either and I definitely felt my age on this trip I can tell you. However, I did have an excellent week. The weather was superb, almost Mediterranean, sometimes too hot to climb and the wide variety of climbing venues on different sides of Portland, and the general environment, proved most interesting for a first time visitor - even more so if you're also a 'twitcher'.



For the week, we'd hired a six-berth caravan that would've suited a family of six rather than the five of us, but it was far better than camping and for just £10 a night each, we made do. Cheap and cheerful sums it up best we thought.

Sunday morning - like every morning in fact - was a leisurely start. It would never take us long to get to our chosen climbing sector; at most, a five-minute drive and no more than ten minutes walking. We decided that a good way to start our climbing week would be to tackle a few routes on the eastern side of Portland at **The Cuttings** which Nick and Mick had sampled the day before. As they did for most of the time on the trip, they climbed together while I climbed (sort of) with Andy. Tom, who had no intention of climbing at all on this trip, went for a walk. We did three or four routes, returned to the caravan for lunch and a rest before venturing down to the **Battleship** area on the western cliffs for a few hours and another three or four routes on **Battleship Back Cliff**. (photo left)

Monday morning saw us at the **Reptile Smile** area of **Blacknor North** on the western side of Portland and another three or four routes ticked off. Surprisingly, I managed a clean ascent of the classic 5 **Slings Shot**, a route that everyone down there appeared to be aiming for. The afternoon was again at **The Cuttings**.

On Tuesday morning, Nick and Andy eventually headed down to the **Coastguard** area on Portland's southwest cliffs. I say eventually, because the keys got accidentally locked in the car. After ten minutes or so of us working out how to retrieve them, an RAC man, who just happened to be on the site, easily broke in without causing any damage.

Access to the **Coastguard** cliffs is tide dependant and although they managed a few routes they couldn't get to all the sectors as the tide was still on its way out. The car was parked at Portland Bill and whilst Nick and Andy were climbing Tom, Mick and I walked back to the caravan site along the coastal path.

Wednesday morning started wet and Nick and Mick headed for home.

We took a one-hour drive eastwards and walked around the Studland cliffs to the north of Swanage. We then drove down to Worth Matravers and walked down to the quarries of **Windspit** where Andy and I climbed a few routes while Tom wandered back to the village to get an early pint in the wonderful Square and Compass pub before we joined him for what was undoubtedly the best beer of the trip.



Andy on South Face Windspit

On the way there, we watched a group filming on the coastal rocks. It looked like a film set with actors in Game of Thrones-style costume. I later discovered that the quarries featured in episodes of Torchwood, Dr. Who, Blake's 7 and the cult film Jubilee.



Speaking of pubs, you won't be at all surprised to learn that we visited all four hostels in Easton. The George, fifteen minutes walk from our base was furthest and also the best of them.



Thursday morning we walked to and climbed at the **Godnor Far North** sector of the **Cheyne Wears** area on the eastern side of Portland (above)

After lunch we returned to the **Battleship** area and climbed on three different sectors: **The Veranda**, the middle cliff of **Battleship Edge** and **Battleship Back Cliff** where Andy climbed what he rated as the route of the trip, **Buoys Will Be Buoys** 6b+. Tom went for another walk while we were at the rock face.



Friday was our touristy day. We first drove over to Lulworth Cove for a walk, then had a wander around the impressive Iron Age Maiden Castle just South of Dorchester. Finally we drove down to Burton Bradstock to walk along the Southwest Coastal Path and beach for a while. Having worked up a thirst we sunk a few beers in The Anchor, watched a band setting up and rehearsing before we returned to the caravan.



Lulworth Cove

On our Thursday walk to the Battleship area, we met a chap who, when he realised that we were climbers and where we were heading, asked us to carry some large wooden logs to the cliff edge for him.

We set off for home on the Saturday, all of us having thoroughly enjoyed our week in Dorset. There were three things which we noted. Firstly, just how friendly everyone was and secondly how young many of the the climbers we met were. Compared to many, our team was made up of Grandads, which from our experience of climbing around the country, is most unusual. Mind you, in general, they weren't necessarily climbing any better than Andy, Nick and Mick.

And finally, after years of jest, Nick Dalzell has finally admitted that there really are hard 4's out there. Yes indeed, it was a superb week.

Chris

After our obvious 'on yer bike' style of reaction we discovered that he was Martin Hallett, the BMC access officer for Swanage and as well as being a top climber, is the bolt fund custodian for Dorset.



He was constructing some steps on the steep descent path to Battleship Edge, so we spent some time with him, helping to move the logs down the cliff and into position.



THE LADIES' CHRISTMAS MEET

This year, thirteen of us gathered at Stair for our Christmas Festivities. This is the annual event that all of us usually manage to attend and as we met up on the Friday afternoon, those who hadn't seen one another for a while had a lot of catching up to do.



Four of us had tickets for the Friday evening at the Theatre by the Lake to see *The Secret Garden*: a really good production enjoyed by us all. After which, it was back to the hut to join the others for mulled wine and mince pies to kick off our gourmet weekend.

It was a really enjoyable walk and when we got to the top, the clouds lifted to create some really atmospheric views.

The forecast for the week before had looked good for the weekend but Saturday dawned grey and cloudy. Jill wanted to conquer Castle Crag and so it was to be.

The remaining members of our weekend party took a leisurely stroll around the head of the lake for lunch in Portinscale.

Three of our fitter members decided to walk there and back from the hut but five of us took the easier option of driving to Grange and starting from there.

On Saturday evening we enjoyed our usual amazing feast. Each of us provided part of the meal - and all for less than £10 a head - brilliant! We followed this with carol singing, capably led Liz, and becoming increasingly hilarious as wine bottles were drained.



On Sunday, the weather was much brighter but as most of us had commitments back home, we spent a leisurely morning tidying up and packing and then, before leaving, we bid a fond farewell to the Lakes and of course, to one another.

Sue Denmark



the FMC FELL RACE

A great turn-out and a grand time for all who came to the 2017 Fell Race

The weather was very good and as usual on the Friday night, Mark's handicap ear was bent with age-old tales of dodgy knees, hips, legs, loose laces and the like.

Even so, we bowed to the handicaps given and eagerly awaited our allotted time with plenty of pontificating and stretching and with Jen handing out her yummy pre-race energy boost of delicious home-made blueberry buns and flap jacks. Thank you Jen.

The conditions were very kind - probably the best we've had for quite a few years. Everyone arrived back happy but generally exhausted and, apart from a very muddy slip for Karen, completed the run without incident and though Christine was in no great hurry to get round the course, she soon rustled up a hearty bowl of soup which went down an absolute storm. Thank you!

After lunch some of our happy band headed for Keswick and on to the George for pre-meal drinks, to toast and congratulate one another and make that perennial promise to do better next time.

Meanwhile, Karen and I were furiously heating up the curries and starters and Christine, eager to get in the action, was whisking up the custard to go with our puddings. Thanks again Fry up.

The food went down very well and with full bellies some of us hobbled up to the pub whilst others stayed back at base, far too tired to move.

It was great to see such a good turn-out with new young blood boosting our numbers - enthusiasm which I hope bodes well for future years. *Dave*

they're off!



| Runner | HANDICAP POSITION | TIME (actual) |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Clive Bell | 1 | 113:00 |
| Dave Hicks | 2 | 74:00 |
| Tony Jackson | 3 | 60:00 |
| Vivienne Broughton | 4 | 55:03 |
| Karen Hicks | 5 | 68:00 |
| Tony Hulme | 6 | 57:15 |
| Mark Broughton * | 7 | 47:45 |
| Chris Thistlethwaite | 8 | 49:17 |
| Jen Chambers ** | 9 | 53:00 |
| Andy Chambers | 9 | 53:00 |
| Dave Earle | 11 | 122:15 |
| Martin Dale | 12 | 72:22 |
| John Hickman | 13 | 60:48 |
| Claire Addy | 14 | 62:04 |
| Dan Hulme | 14 | 62:04 |
| Caroline Webb | 16 | 89:14 |
| Neil Baines | 17 | 59:13 |
| Christine Fry | 18 | 113:08 |

**Fastest Male **Fastest Female*

18 out and - eventually - all 18 back home



well done folks!

CAPTIVATING CRAGSIDE



with Rob Lewis

This, the most innovative and unusual of Victorian stately homes, the home of domestic hydro-electricity at the forefront of technology of the time, brainchild of entrepreneur Lord Armstrong and set in a thousand acres of lovely landscaped gardens, was the destination chosen for our 2017 FMC meet in the North-East.

The view is breathtaking as you turn into the drive and look across the lake to the neat cluster of carefully-labelled buildings built in warm red stone amongst which is the bunkhouse.



We busied ourselves stowing gear and cooking but then a crisis of sorts occurred. The pub was miles away in Rothbury; how was anyone going to get there? No one was volunteering to drive, and one or two in the company were beginning to get anxious. (No names need be mentioned but if you were at the Annual Dinner, you'll draw your own conclusions). So, a magnanimous gesture was made and everyone - in two groups - was ferried to the village in my car.

Here another problem arose. Too many pubs. Should it be the Angler's Arms? Perhaps the Queen's Head? What about Newcastle House or even the Turk's Head? *continues on page 22*

Having driven from Cumbria in the afternoon, and being new to the place, I was surprised to find that the only sign which seemed to be missing was that of the bunkhouse. I drove past the buildings again, this time more carefully, and discovered that someone had parked a large camper van exactly in front of the bunkhouse sign. Who this was soon became apparent as Dave Earle appeared from within it's gloomy depths.

This was a small gathering - unfortunately John and June had had to cry off late - but Clive and Dave Earle had come early and were soon joined by Christine and Cherry Earle, Roy and Andy Dunhill arriving slightly later. A consequence of the small numbers was that I had a room to myself at bunkhouse prices - unexpected luxury!



In the end, we settled on The Narrow Nick, a tiny but friendly hostelry with excellent beer on tap. Andy set off to pick up Christine (Barbier) and so our company for the weekend was complete.

On returning to the bunkhouse, there was popular folk music, with Christine F in good voice. On last year's meet I had been challenged to a guitar /song duel by Nick Dalzell, but found his guitar very difficult to play for a finger style guitarist like myself. Resultantly, I had brought my own guitar along expecting a return event, but . . . no Nick, so we had some songs regardless of his absence.



The Saturday morning was bright and clear, and so we all set off for a walk, pausing only to view the impressive Archimedes Screw in the grounds and to complete some of the water experiments in the pump house.



We walked along the popular riverside path by the side of the River Coquet to reach Rothbury, passing Thrum Mill which was the subject of one of the *Restoration Man* TV programmes, and we were soon in the village. At this point, Cherry decided to cross the stepping stones to the other side of the river, until we called her back to tell her that we weren't going that way. Nevertheless, crossing the river twice by this means was impressive as it was quite high and running fast. Cherry then decided that the lure of shopping in Rothbury was a greater attraction than the intended walk.

Our way continued across meadows following the footpath near the river. There was a brief moment of alarm. Christine F is not happy in the presence of lots of cows. Lots of cows stood in the field and actually on the path.



(ed: phew!! - that was buttock-clenchedly close)

Her resolution wavered . . . then Andy stepped forward, waved his arms and advanced. The cows momentarily stood their ground . . . but then made off. Crisis averted.

Christine breathed easily again.

The path eventually reached the river bridge which would take us into Thropton and here lay a shingle beach of sorts.

Most members of the company cast themselves upon this as if sunning themselves in the Mediterranean, despite the cold, and Christine's regular inquiries as to whether it was lunchtime yet were at last answered. Looking at the state of the river 'beach' I found a spot on the bridge parapet to sit on and enjoy my sandwiches*.

* (ed: after the palaver with those psychotic cows, my appetite was done-for!)

The walk through Thropton took us past The Three Wheat Heads and The Cross Keys, neither of which we stopped at, although Andy rather ironically directed me to the sign outside the Cross Keys announcing a folk club that evening.

Christine F was given the task of finding our way onto and across the moor, and after a brief hesitation where some new housing had obscured the path, she was off. Before long we were wondering if Clive had had his three Weetabix that morning as he forged ahead of the rest of us.

Given his later Fell Race result, he was clearly in training.



The open moor top was delightful, with views across to Simonside and as far as distant Cheviot. The weather had improved and was quite warm and sunny by mid-afternoon, when we found time to stop for a second lunch.



Completing the walk, various people did various things. I was happy to get a shower but had to make do with an old towel I found in the boot of the car as I had forgotten mine; I think Roy went for a sleep and others prepared food.

Christine B went off into the darkness for an hour of mysterious exercises to do with some form of non-aggressive martial arts. Both Christines had brought cake and Christine F generously ensured that everyone who wanted a slice had one.

Nobody wanted to drive to the pub but fortunately everyone had come prepared with plenty to drink . . . except me. I had forgotten to bring the wine and beer. In stepped Roy, rescuing the situation with a very acceptable supermarket red.

At this point he and I were testing each other with a few arcane questions (ed: the drink talking?) but this soon turned into a full quiz for which Roy and I had to think of lots of questions very quickly and Christine F and Andy soon became involved in a personal competition.

Andy remarked that I didn't half know a lot of useless stuff, but responses were forthcoming from everybody with Cherry and Dave coming up with answers to some of the more unusual questions and Clive definitely winning the science round. Andy and Christine B added questions about Italy from a quiz they'd recently attended.

continues overleaf



The next morning it rained - unremitting rain precluding any attempt to get out and enjoy the outdoors. However, this was Cragside, so off we all went to the house (free to those of us who were National Trust members) to witness the unusual combination of delights within.



The house offers a diverse number of styles, grand views and science in the form of the electricity room, with early developments in the use of electricity in the house on display.



Parties of members wandered off, met up, wandered again until we all joined together in time for a brew in the cafe. Roy kept popping up when least expected waving his camera and demanding that we pose for photos.



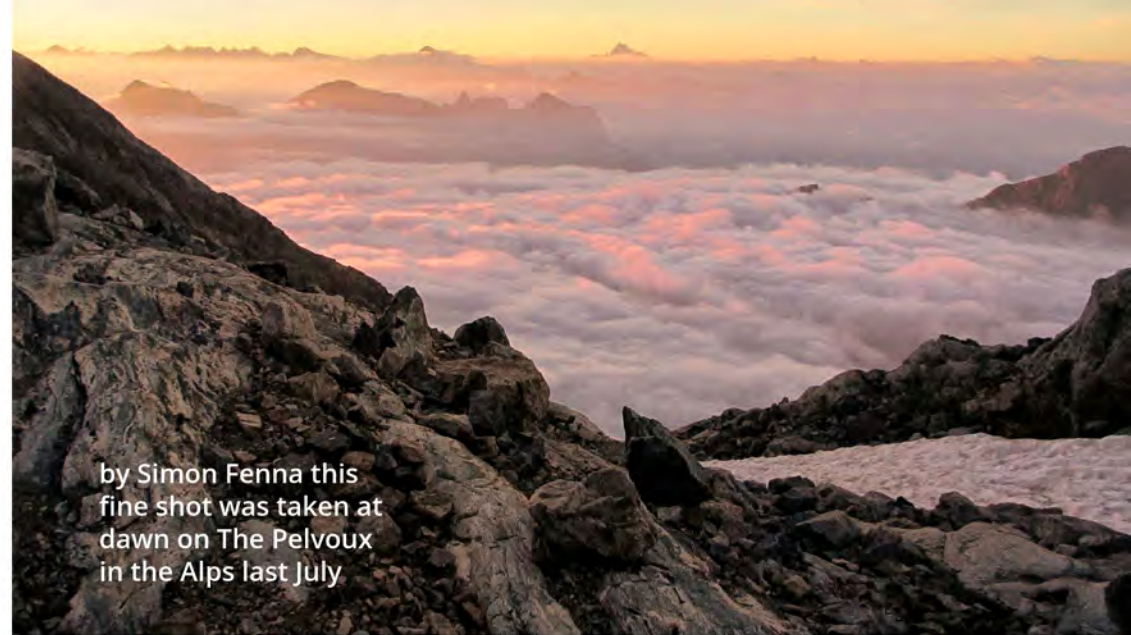
Walking back to the car park we passed a building labelled *Young Engineers Zone*. We threatened to send Clive in.

As I drove back across the empty moors, bleak in the rain, I reflected that no great deeds had been done, no hard routes climbed, but that this had been a thoroughly enjoyable weekend spent in very good company.

Rob

NICKED OFF FACEBOOK

a few photos from the FMC facebook page that caught the editor's eye



by Simon Fenna this fine shot was taken at dawn on The Pelvoux in the Alps last July

below are four of the party of five on the Bernia Ridge on the Costa Blanca photo by Alan Blackburn (see back cover)



And this chilly beauty from Skiddaw by Dave Ball was shot early in the New Year

2017 EVENING CLIMBING MEETS

Another year and enthusiasm is always high at the start of the season. 13 members attended the first official meet of the year at Denham in April. Things were looking good!

Normally, we try to start the year with an evening on the Climbing Towers in Blackpool, however for the second year running they were not open in April. I discovered that the Council had failed to organise the annual checks that need to take place on the towers ironmongery before they can open! The club have actually been in touch with one of our local MPs regarding this lapse of bureaucracy.

Back at DENHAM, it was cold! But the usual classics were ascended, including *Time* by myself, Terry Robinson and David Wilson. We had to visit The Red Lion in Wheelton, as the old favourite, Top Lock, had closed!

Next meet was at TROWBARROW and 15 members turned up. Already it was to be the best attended meet of the season! Cold again, Terry had a go at some dodgy VS called *Eclipse* which turned out to be more like E1 or 2! We packed out the Woodlands for some excellent beer and snacks.

Into May and WILTON 3 was next up. 6 members attended.

ANGLEZARK followed and 8 members enjoyed a midge-free evening. An interesting route called *Transformation* gave myself and Terry a bit of a tussle at the end of the night. Last time I did it it was VS. It is now E1 in the new guide. We had to endure The Red Lion at Wheelton again! It was fast becoming our favourite pub of the season!

TROY was visited by a good team and the Dog Inn, Martin Bennett's local, proved to be a friendly pub. CADSHAW had not been on a meets list for some years. 6 members including some new ones checked it out and found it still offers some good easy leading as well as some polished classics. The midge did nibble but didn't manage to put us off.

The first meet in June was to EGERTON. Again, 6 members did battle, however at least one struggled to find their way into the quarry after some motorway problems getting there. Some cleaning had been done recently and a smouldering tree seemed to keep the midge off. Both our chosen routes were decidedly uphill and Dizzy, the *Desert Snake* is not 5B!

HUTTON ROOF was the first casualty of the season. The first bolt clipping meet was to GIGG SOUTH and 12 members showed up but unfortunately due to some organisational mess, at two different crags! And some members at Gigg did not know others were also there! I guess it is a long and woody crag and I wasn't there to sort them all out.

7 members made the trek up to THORN CRAG. Bouldering was the best activity as it was very cold for mid June! However, Steve Wrigley made ascents of *Prior Visit* and the *Firemans Slippery Pole* with a rope. The Fleece at Dolphinholme provided excellent ale afterwards. The last meet in June to ROBIN PROCTORS was cancelled due to poor weather. It was moved to the next week and replaced a grit meet by popular demand. Four of us rubbed shoulders with the likes of Wilf Williamson, of Wilf's Cafe fame at the crag.

July now and another new venue. SUMMIT QUARRY is just south of Todmorden and looked good in the new guide. Joanne and me arrived to find team Wood top-roping the classic *Graves End*, and making a meal of it too! Give them their due, they had strayed onto the more direct E3. We had a pleasant evening there with the midges just about holding off. I couldn't resist leading said *Graves End* before we left. Superb! One member went to the wrong crag and arrived as we were leaving. The pub of choice was closed so we visited an old favourite, The Staff of Life.

7 members visited POT SCAR, the last long distance meet of the summer. We did several routes but an earlier start time was needed really. The WITCHES meet was moved because of the weather but 8 members still attended. The Dog Inn in Whalley was as good as ever! The first August meet fell to the weather and the meet the week after was moved to stop a repeat performance.

9 of us made it to the upper tier of WARTON MAIN for some pleasant sport routes, now fully revealed in the new guide. We had some new blood with us too. They offered us butties in the Malt Shovel in Warton village, and if we let them know we are coming next year!!

More bad weather saw WILTON 1 cancelled. So, another new crag sparked some interest. Members went to OTTERGEAR on three separate evenings due to another organisational mess up. Facebook does have its flaws unfortunately. A good number of members did get to the crag though. Again, I wasn't able to make it!

Nobody wanted to go to TROWBARROW, so John Hickman agreed to hold my ropes on a newly bolted route in WARTON MAIN. Its on the right side of the main quarry near the old Dave Bates route, *Torture Garden* and opinion seems to suggest it is 6C+/7A. I made the belay after numerous falls and some clip stick action. Not fit enough after the summer we've just had, but it is a good piece of climbing and I'll be back for a cleaner ascent!

DENHAM again was the last meet of the season. As Summer rolled on the weather took a turn for the worst. We were being forced inside early and with the opening of a new exciting bouldering wall, Steve Longworth organised a meet to BOULDER UK. A fine addition to the indoor circuit.



Martin Dale, Sandbag



Terry Robinson



Steve Clark



Mike Lewis



Troy May 2017



Ottergear August 2017



Wilton 1



Egerton, June 2017

So, to sum up . . . Some poor weather, some well-attended meets, and some that perhaps could've been better organised.

My thanks to all those members who attended and helped make our meets such enjoyable experiences.

Unless anyone else wants to do it, I'll continue to put a syllabus together for 2018 and your ideas or suggestions for venues old and new will be gratefully received.

Martin

Martin's Big, Bad 60th Birthday Bash

No one could ever accuse Joanne Leadbetter of bad taste, but after unveiling the most excrementally offensive birthday cake of all time, ALL BETS ARE OFF! It tasted lovely though - even that yummy chocolatey sauce - and the editor has a strong stomach for such trifles. Speaking of which, if it had de-frosted for much longer, trifle is what we'd have finished up with!



While he wasn't scoffing cake, your editor was busy snapping away at anyone in his sights daft enough to move or stay still long enough, which covers most bases - so, back from the chemists, here are the snaps:



Crikey! That must've been one hell of an old roll of film!
What went so horribly wrong?



That's more like it - the Nobby we know



and it looks like he's having a good time



lots of old friends wishing him well



familiar faces; family faces



famous faces too - climbing royalty no less!

Dave Birkett and wife Mary from the Lakes



and Simon Panton from North Wales, with his wife Clare

Joanne tells us that Martin was chuffed no end to see old pals and especially busy lads like Dave and Simon showing up for his party. Simon confided to Joanne that Martin was 'the man he looked up to when he was just starting out' and although at one point, Dave was getting 'his ear chewed off' by Joanne's Dad he admitted he really enjoyed listening to the tales he had to tell. Jo & Martin were most impressed with the service provided by the Coledale staff and their boss Jeff and thank them all.



ADRIAN CLIFFORD

(1955 -2017)



Remembered
by his friend
Chris Thistlethwaite

Adrian later went on two Himalayan expeditions, Nuptse and Muztagh Towers - both with the late Mal Duff - but decided that continuing doing this was pushing his luck and that his time was better spent climbing in the Alps and his beloved Scotland.

Working in Lincolnshire limited his potential for going climbing so you can imagine his joy when he became a GP in Keswick in 2001. As soon as he heard that the job was his he phoned me. I'd never heard a man so happy. As we all know Keswick is a great town for ease of access to the mountains and he endeavoured to maximise his free time actively participating in as many outdoor activities as he could. Winter Mountaineering was always at the top of his agenda. He put up a number of new routes in the Lakes, two of which I'm proud to say were with me in tow. He also continued to climb extensively in Scotland with numerous other club members. He was also a regular attendee of the January Ice meets in Cogne, Italy and the Briancon area of France.

A number of us have walked, climbed, run, mountain biked, caved, swum, skied etc with Adrian but he also took up scuba diving, parapenting, flying microlights and sky diving. An adventurous soul one could say. He was also an active member of Keswick Mountain Rescue Team for a number of years, only giving that up so that he could focus more on the above sports.

First and foremost though he was a doctor and a very good one at that. Whenever the conversation got around to anything medical he immediately became involved, wanting to know details. He'd research stuff at home for friends and was always happy to give advice. He has treated me in the past and I've been with him on two occasions when a nearby climber was seriously injured in a fall and he immediately took over. Adrian wouldn't pass an accident until he knew everything was under control and even after retiring from General Practice, he studied for a diploma in Mountain Medicine. He was a man truly dedicated to his profession.

Adrian leaves behind his wife Susan, his daughters Amie and Sarah and two granddaughters Leila and Niamh. Our sympathies go out to them. He will be greatly missed.

Chris Thistlethwaite



My very dear friend Adrian Clifford suddenly passed away at his home in Keswick on Monday 18th September 2017. A shock to us all.

Unbeknown to me and all those who knew him, Adrian had been suffering from depression for many years. Only during the last few months of his life did we discover this when his condition deteriorated. Of course his immediate family knew but honoured Adrian's request not to have this divulged.

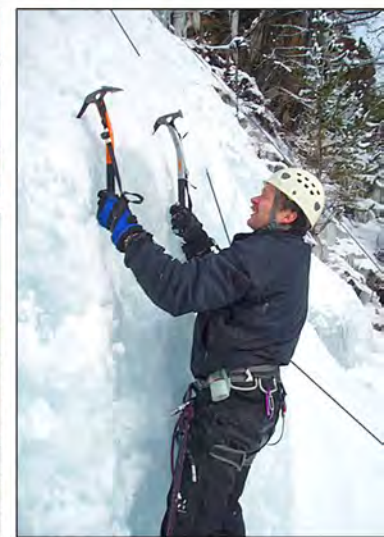
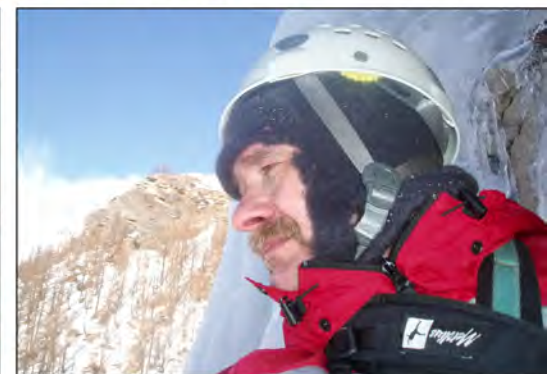
Adrian was one of only a few people to join the FMC who had never resided in the Fylde. As he had attended many climbing, mountaineering and mountain biking meets, both unofficial and official, it was obvious to all that he would be an asset to the club and his application for membership was accepted unanimously. He was an enthusiastic, experienced and very capable mountaineer as well as being an all round damn good fellow.

I first met Adrian in June 1981 in the car park above Freyr, a crag in Belgium. I used to climb with the local RAF Mountaineering Club during that time when I lived in Germany and Adrian had just been posted to a nearby station. We immediately became good friends and climbed regularly together on local crags.

Although he enjoyed rock climbing his main passion was winter mountaineering, a pursuit he developed whilst at university studying medicine in Scotland.



One of Adrian's claims to fame was that during this time, he took one Joe Simpson on his first winter climbs. He also took a mutual friend of ours, Ted Atkins on his first winter route . . . on the Eiger! Ted later climbed its North Face and amongst many other mountains, summited Everest. Adrian, a mentor perhaps?



Steve Longworth and Martin Bennett on The Bernia Ridge,
Costa Blanca photo: Alan Blackburn



www.fyldemountaineeringclub.org

The Fylde Mountaineering Club
is affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council

