

Fylde Mountaineering Club Adventures...and more

Spring 2020



Celebration Time

An Adventure Playground

Fun and Frolics

Health

Water Babes

Some sadness..





Welcome to the first newsletter of 2020 and the very first in its new format. I am looking forward to reading it myself and seeing what everybody has been up to over the last 12 months or so. Please keep your articles rolling in as they may inspire others to follow in your footsteps and achieve even greater things. I know it has been a particularly soggy start to the year, but I do know quite a few members have been enjoying themselves abroad and we have to believe that the rain must end one day. Enjoy the magazine and have fun in the hills in 2020.

Dave

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When I took on this job of Editor I knew it would be a big task, and yes it has been a BIG learning curve for me! Not having done anything like this before, but liking 'techno' stuff, I thought I would 'have a go'. Yes it has been challenging, frustrating at times (and I am glad there is an 'undo' button), but also thought provoking, creative and fun! I would like to thank John W for his help in this, and also Roy for his info and advice-couldn't have done it without you guys, and also thanks for the last 4years Roy-a hard act to follow!

As you will see I have re-named the magazine, as I think this is what we are all about! We do have some great adventures and fun on our hols and meets. I do hope this meets with your approval.

I would like to thank all those members who have submitted their great articles-without you we wouldn't have a magazine, so thank you for your time and effort- it is much appreciated.

Anyway, I do hope you enjoy my first edition of the magazine. I have thoroughly enjoyed putting it together for you, and hope to improve as I go along! I thank you too for your patience while I entered into the domain of 'Editor'. I am hoping to produce 2 magazines a year, one in Spring and one in Autumn. Any feedback you may wish to give me will be welcome-things that are good, things not so good, and anything you wish me to include in the mag, after all this is YOUR magazine.

Thank you for trusting me with this task.

Christine

A SCOTTISH VENTURE INTO THE WHITE STUFF

brrrr...

As recalled by Barrie.

Members, 8 places booked, though Chris Bell unfortunately was unable to attend due to illness.

The Adventurers-Mark Bowden-meet leader, Barrie Crook, Alan Blackburn, Kevan Ebbrell, Mike Howe, Mark Lambert and Matt Reed.

Thursday 7 March

Mike, Kev and Barrie arrived in Fort William mid-afternoon and stocked up with food at LIDL including 'the best whisky in the world', Queen Margot, £13.49 per 70 cl. bottle. They were impressed with

Calluna mountain centre accommodation, (Mike Kimber's place), well equipped kitchen, lounge, 3 dormitories 4, 2, 2, everything very smart and clean. There was surprisingly more snow on the summits than anticipated due to the present stormy weather.

In the evening Mark Bowden and Alan arrived.

Friday 8 March

Miserable rainy day, MKB decided a day for one of the great rail journeys, Fort William to Mallaig. Showery weather all the way, on arrival they had planned to spend 6 hours in Mallaig (or a trip to Skye but no ferries!), but still raining, so back on the early next train to familiarise themselves with the remains of the fort An Gearasdan, (the garrison which



Alan, Mark and Matt on their ascent of Stob Ban (999m) in the Mamores



Mark at Bothy Lairig Leacach

became the Fort under William of orange), and then Wetherspoons. Being more adventurous and younger Mark and Alan decided on Stob Ban (977m), one of the Grey Corries starting from Corriechoille near Spean Bridge. They

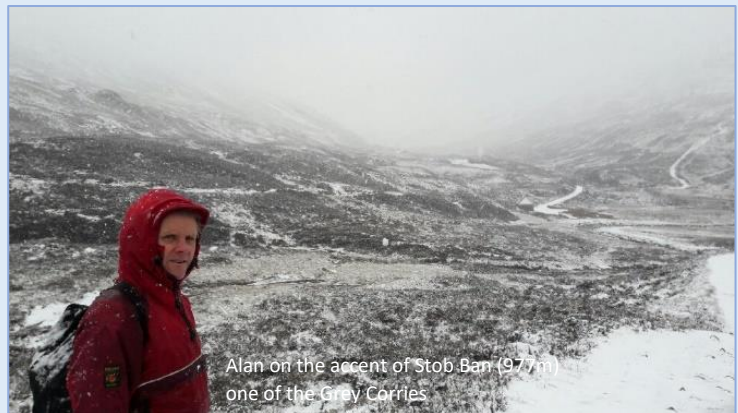
cycled south to Bothy Lairig Leacach and climbed. It hailed and snowed and blew but they got there.

In the evening Matt and Mark Lambert arrived from the Rucksacks Club hut and afterwards CIC hut.

Saturday 9 March

Blue sky, a much brighter day but snow showers expected.

MKB chose to visit Mam na Gualainn (796m) by driving on a minor road to Lundavra and then walking south on the military road to Lairigmor. It would



Alan on the ascent of Stob Ban (977m) one of the Grey Corries

then be possible to ascend the Corbett by means of the coffin road. A helicopter was spotted heading for Glencoe. There were problems crossing Allt na Lairige More but Mike and Kev got to the summit in stormy conditions which dissuaded them from continuing the 2.5 km. ridge to Beinn na Caillich.

Alan Mark, Mark and Matt decided on another Stob Ban (999m) in the Mamores from Glen Nevis. They followed Allt Coire a' Mhusgain and crossed to the east ridge and reached the summit and a good time was had by all.



The summit of Stob Ban (999m) in the Mamores

Blizzards were forecast for Rannoch Moor so Matt and Mark afterwards headed home. For the remaining 5 of us a group meal was appropriate, and our leader had chosen Garrison West with a 4 star recommendation and it was excellent, in fact FW is now much more upmarket than some of us remember it. The first people we met in the place were Phil Lee and his climbing partner, a barrister from Hertfordshire so we learned about this historic county. They had had a stressful day in Glen Coe on Stob Coire nan Lochan where 2 climbers had been benighted in a gully and they were first on the scene, hence the helicopter. Unfortunately one climber died from hypothermia after being flown to hospital in Aberdeen.

Sunday 10 March

Alan and Mark headed home which just left MKB. Due to hip problems they contented themselves with a local walk to the radio mast on Cow Hill, extremely windy, but an excellent viewpoint, and a descent to Glen Nevis on very well maintained paths. We finally called in Wetherspoons again to learn from a waiter that recently plans to make Fort William's smelter a future hub of Britain's automotive industry were well underway with Liberty's flagship alloy wheels factory!

Monday 11 March

The journey home was uneventful but with glorious views. The snow level had dropped a good 1000 ft. during our visit, the roads were clear but the snow ploughs were out in force.

As for our meet, an enjoyable and amiable time was had by all in excellent accommodation. Many thanks Mark. Queen Margot, acceptable at the price, all consumed!

Barrie B. Crook

LADIES AT LANGDALE

14- 16TH JUNE

Stalwarts of the Ladies Meets met on Friday evening 14th June at Langdale hut, and settled in with lots of catching up of news and consumption of wine. Living far apart now, from Fleetwood, Preston,



the hut for Hodge Close and Holme Fell, pausing to watch the swimmers in the quarry. We enjoyed a picnic with splendid views, and returned via

Low and High Tilberthwaite, which looked picture postcard pretty in the (by now) dry weather. However, if ever anyone finds a pair of spectacles not far from the cairn on Holme Fell, they are mine, having fallen from my shirt while inelegantly trying to scramble to my feet after the picnic!



Lancaster, Kendal and Edinburgh, there were tales to tell, adventures to recount and photos to share.

Saturday's weather was doleful, and, prepared for the worst, we set out from

Back at the hut we had tea and cake before setting forth to Slater bridge and Rob's Hole, where one intrepid member was excited to indulge in a spot of very noisy wild swimming, the water temperature being what can only be described euphemistically as exhilarating.



Over the hill to the Three Shires, where we were able to sit outside in a short burst of sunshine, occasionally leaping around the garden like loonies, trying to find a phone signal. Drinks duly consumed, we returned to the hut. Nibbles, gin and tonic, curry, rice, naan, poppadums, pudding, cheese and biscuits left everyone groaning with food and, after setting the world to rights, we collapsed into bed.



Despite optimistic weather forecasts, Sunday morning started with grey downpours, but brightened up with the arrival of a 6th member and a route consensus. As the weather was still showery, we headed towards Chapel Stile, leaving a decision to head left down Great Langdale valley until we could see how the weather and our knees were bearing up. In the event,

the decision just to press on to Chapel Stile proved to be the correct one. A particularly vicious little shower drove four wet and straggly ladies into a rather upmarket hotel where we unashamedly dripped onto their posh floors while consuming hot beverages.



The one of us, more cultured than the rest, remembered that Kurt Schwitter's Merz bau was nearby, so we went to look at that, before walking back to the hut and lunch. True to the law of Sod, the weather then brightened up and the sun deigned to appear, but we were ready for packing up and going home.

Disappointed as always not to see more new faces but thanks to all ladies who attended for good food, good ambience and good company. To those who couldn't make it, hope to see you next time.

PAT BENNETT

Stair's 50 Golden YEARS

BBQ, SONGS, SLACK-LINE

CAPEERS and FUN!....



The weekend was aimed at marking the opening of our Club Hut at Stair in June 1969, and one of my priorities was to book perfect weather for the occasion, and indeed the weather proved to be absolutely perfect. It was wonderful to see so many members together ranging from the newest of members to some of the longest serving (careful use of words there!).

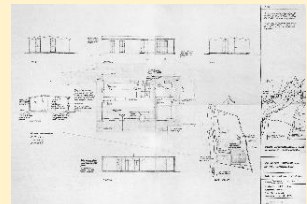
Saturday started with the enthusiastic members heading off to the hills for a walk or to the crags for some climbing. All had their instructions to be back at the hut before 3.00pm when the festivities would begin. The less enthusiastic (alcohol/hangover related) took a more sedate walk to Keswick for some retail therapy.

Tony Jackson set up a display of old climbing and camping equipment donated by Margaret Roberts the



daughter of one of our past members Alan Roberts who has sadly recently passed away. For such old equipment it is in amazingly good condition, and fascinating to look at. Other members brought some of their old gear to reminisce about the good old days. Peter Roscoe brought along some of the original plans and drawings from the days when Stair was still a germ of an idea, and he kindly addressed us all and gave us a fascinating account of the journey he and the other members involved at the time, went

through in securing the land where the hut is built, and the difficult journey taken



influencing the right people to be able to secure planning permission to build the hut that we can sometimes take for granted.

Your Chairman took on the role of le Chef for the afternoon and cooked his own weight in burgers and sausages while Karen, with lots of help and offers of help from many willing members, so thank you to all who pitched in to make the day the success it was. Christine (Fry-up) Fry not only provided her usual drizzle cakes, she also made a multi-tiered birthday cake for the Hut which looked just the part and lasted all of about 90 seconds before being devoured by the hungry pack!

An event like this would not be complete without some live music, so Tony Jackson, Rob Lewis and myself, in a somewhat chaotic way did our best to entertain the crowd with some light hearted folk music and sea shanties. In a more serious moment, we did sing one of Alan Bell's songs as a tribute to him, and to remember that he was also one of those also involved in the building of Stair. It was really nice that Jenny Tolley was able to celebrate with us, as her husband Mike was also one of the pioneers of Stair, and his photo in the lounge shows him surveying the land along with Frank Lord.

The celebrations carried on with some heart stopping moments for some attempting the slack-line challenge. Fortunately there were no broken ankles, and I can fairly confidently predict that no member of the FMC will

be attempting a high wire crossing of the Grand Canyon.

The evening did get cooler and we were finally forced indoors where the party spirit appeared to get a second wind. More singing and story-telling ensued, and Fry-up did not let us down with her constant drive for Lush of the Year nominations, and she entertained us with some extremely enthusiastic flamenco dancing.

A fantastic day was had by all. Here's to the next excuse for a celebration.....

Dave



Pete letting us know about Stair's journey



Not bad for old gear!



Vintage Meets

2019

STAIR AND LITTLE LANGDALE

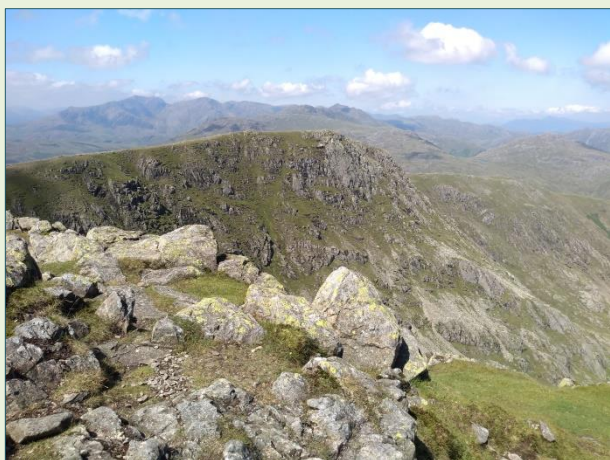
With Mike Howe

The idea behind these meets is to get a few people up to the huts for walking/climbing during midweek. Although we put a couple on the syllabus, anyone could organise one if the hut is not otherwise in use. They are generally casual meets arranged to suit the people who attend and provide the opportunity to catch up with members you may not meet often.

The first meet at Little Langdale in July gave me the opportunity to complete the Wetherlam round in lovely weather. I was on my own as other members came up later.

However the following day I had a pleasant day with Jennie Tolley and Peter wandering over to Skelwith Bridge and Elterwater. The wet weather made the waterfalls impressive.

Since I have only been in the club 40 years, we thought the following day



was the perfect opportunity to visit Cathedral Quarry...for the first time! We then followed this by exploring the quarries around Tilberthwaite. We had previously advised various people including the driver of a lowered BMW that the ford was not the best route to "Cathedral".

The second meet took place at Stair in September where Andy Dunhill and I joined Martin Dale to complete one of his last three Wainwrights, Seathwaite Fell, down Borrowdale. They may not be big hills but don't have great highways up them and

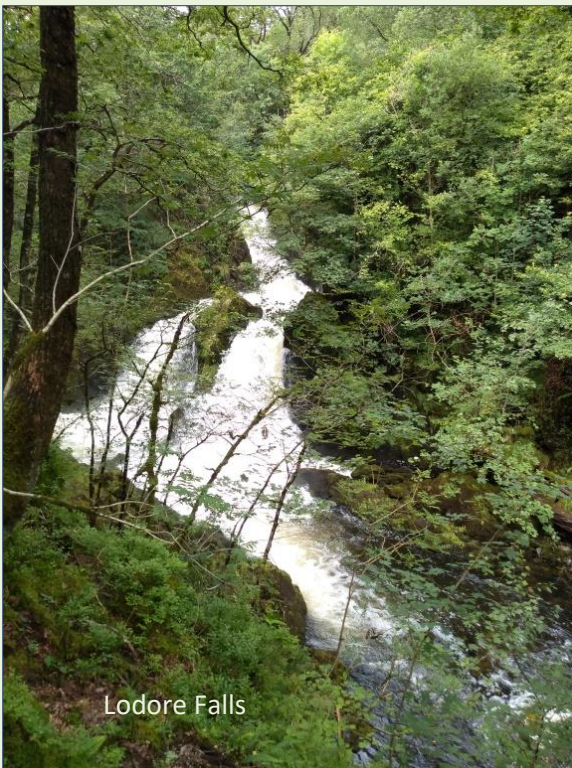
generally give good views. This was followed by a pleasant visit to the café in Grange. Just proves even the best climbers don't mind a spot of afternoon tea! The following day I joined John and Delphine Stockton (who I hadn't seen for several years) for a circuit of Derwent Water in mixed weather ie WET! The views are always good and we admired the recently extended Lodore Falls Hotel (some from the inside – nature calls!). The final day John and Del went off to do Rowling End and Causey Pike while I did a bit of pruning before an early start home.

Various others attended (or meant to) and some called in whilst passing (Rob) but those who were there all had a convivial time.

Try to attend a future meet or organise your own.

Mike Howe

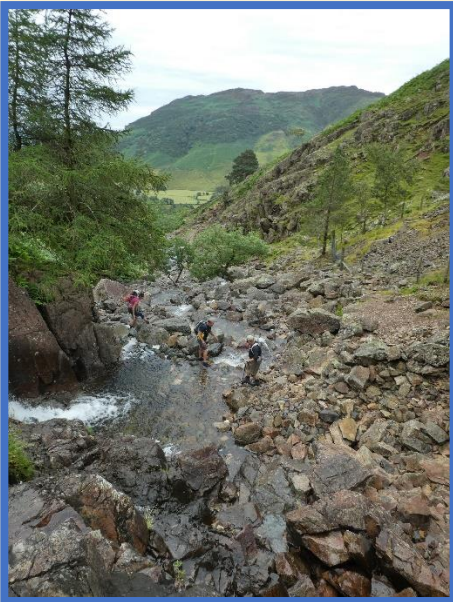
Who was with Mike-Jenny and Peter, Andy, Martin, John, Delphine and Rob.



Lodore Falls

ROCKS, WATERFALLS

and NEW FRIENDS



Intro and Scrambling Meet-
July 2019 with Dave Hicks

Hut meets, and certainly those at Little Langdale can be very weather dependent, so with the so called Met office Amber Weather Warning I was expecting last minute cancellations and a poor turn out. Reassuringly the club does still have all weather members happy to risk a little rain in search of fun.

Woody, Hal and Martin Dale had already been there since Wednesday chasing the sun and Friday saw the arrival of Geoff Brindle, intro members Pete (Will) Wilson and Alec Peacock, Caroline, Karen and myself. While Geoff, Pete and Alec fed themselves and sampled the “delights” of the Three Shires (may have spelt that wrong?) Woody, Hal, Martin, myself and Karen went in search of Thrang Crag above Chapel Stile as there are some new routes shown in the BMC update book. Neither expedition was particularly successful as we didn’t find what we were looking for, and the others didn’t find the quality of beer nor the hospitality they were hoping for at the Three Shires (still not sure I’ve spelt that right!).

With the promise of plenty of rain on the Saturday we all felt duty bound to make the most of Friday night and waxed lyrical well into the evening/night getting to know our new prospective members over a drink or two. The plan for the morning was an early start and to meet Steve Clark and Howard Shaw at the Stickle Ghyll car park at 09:30.

Contrary to normal rules everyone was up early, breakfasted and ready to leave the hut before 09:00! Woody and Hall decided to have a drier option and climb at Kendal wall however the rest of us stuck to the plan and set in



light drizzle to meet up with Steve and Howard. The plan was to go up to Stickle Tarn via the Ghyll for most of the way instead of the usual wearisome path. This was to entail some rather wet climbing up a couple of the waterfalls, therefore all were instructed to bring a harness as I would set up belays at the appropriate places to make sure all got home in one piece.

Steve and Howard arrived on time and we all set off, first up the path to the bridge and then entered the Ghyll there. Lots of rock hopping followed which was enjoyed by all until we reached our first waterfall climb. The belay was set up and everyone had a hoot climbing up through the waterfall and all got pretty wet in the process. Unfortunately duty called and I had to belay everyone so missed on the wet fun, but hey ho, these sacrifices have to be made.



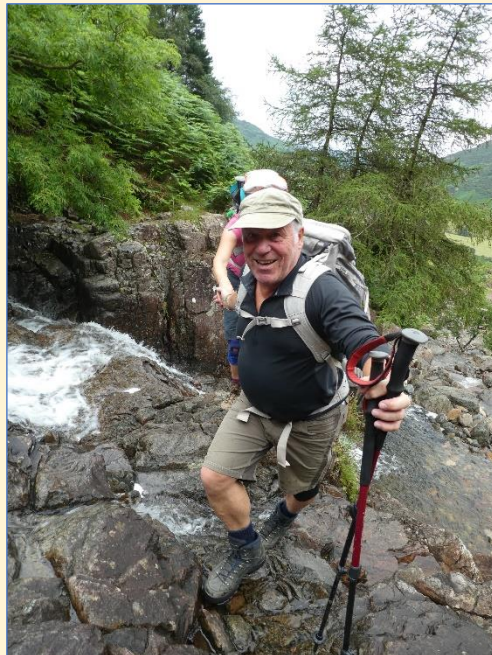
More scrambling followed until it was prudent to get out and follow the path for the last section to the tarn where we walked round to below Jacks Rake for our lunch stop. This was decision time now as the original plan had been to go up Jacks Rake however not only was it wet but the temperature was suddenly dropping and the rain began again. While we were

having lunch we had been watching two groups making extremely slow progress up the rake and so the decision was made to go down. We decided to go down via White Ghyll, however the weather was getting worse, so we went round the back of Tarn Crag and down to the Stickle Ghyll path, again returning safely back to the Stickle Barn for beer and medals.

All agreed that it had been a really fun day and was something out of the ordinary that we have all passed on many occasions, but not taken the time to make a change from our usual activities and just enjoy some simple scrambling fun.

With the weather set to be even worse for the Sunday some of us headed off home that evening and the others the following morning. I think everyone will agree that we all had a great time, in great company, having FUN.

Dave



A tribute to Mike Sissons

1966 - 2020

I first met Mike in the old Blackpool climbing wall, in the cave, as it was known. He was there climbing with his mate George. They were good and seemed like nice lads, so I introduced them to the club. They became regulars on the evening climbing meets and also on many weekend trips.



Eventually, George discovered women and drifted away from the club. Mike then became my regular climbing partner. He was very keen, enthusiastic and always up for anything. I remember him calling me up to go bouldering at 3pm on a Winters afternoon, just because he'd been out and bought a bouldering mat. He insisted in driving me up to the Bridestones for what turned out to be about 20 minutes of action before it went dark and we had to go to the pub!

Mike was a very accomplished climber and was soon leading up to about E2, with the odd harder thing thrown in. Perhaps his best lead was "Sense of Doubt" up at Trowbarrow. He had a style, and many will remember his flashing feet. He did not like steep and certainly let you know about it (and everyone else on the crag) if he was having a hard time. He was also a competent skier, most of the time! He once disappeared off the piste backwards. Fortunately he landed in a deep snow drift, completely submerging himself. He also picked up the wrong skis from outside the bar then wondered why they would not fit next morning!

Mike was the life and soul of every party, always laughing, joking and acting the fool. He did however have the slightly annoying habit of singing just the odd word or line from his favourite songs, most notably the theme from Rawhide.

Eventually we, his friends, noticed all was not quite right in Mike's world. We became aware that he had inherited Huntington's Disease. This still did not dampen his passion for the outdoors. As his condition progressed,

he became prone to spillages and even proclaimed himself to be “The king of stains”.

Perhaps his last hurrah was the USA trip in 2006. Here he nearly got arrested following an altercation with a bear. The bear was made of porcelain and was sat in a boat at the time, not a real one! He will also be remembered for his “emergency underpants”. All holes and stitching! Mike did manage quite a few climbs on the trip albeit not at his previous standard. After America, Mike realised that the time had come to hang up his ropes, and he quietly disappeared from club activities.

Sadly, on the 4th of January 2020 Mike lost his battle with this unforgiving condition.

There are so many stories about Mike, I could go on and on for pages. I’m also sure a lot of you will have your own memories. He was a lovely bloke and a pleasure to have known. A true club character! He was missed when he departed from club activities and he will be missed now he’s gone. I’m sure however that he will be up there with all those other club greats singing Rawhide at the top of his voice!

Martin Dale



Wild swimming, paddle boarding and a great BBQ

August 2019

With Karen Hicks



What a weekend! Weather turned out better than expected for this years' annual wild swim so there were a few hardy folk who ventured into the deep, deep depths of Crummock Water. There was myself and Dave, Fry-Up, Leanne Sutton and Caroline Webb.

Caroline excelled herself by swimming to the island and back. Fry-Up exceeded her own expectations by

swimming out of her depth in her nice new wetsuit bought specially for the occasion, and Leanne put in a good stint swimming to the island and back a few times.



Dave and I brought our paddle board along, and even though the water was a little rough, managed to stay upright for a while.

The chilly weather finally drove us out of the water, and after a hot brew and a change of clothes, we retired to the Kirkstile Inn for well-earned beer and medals.

Dave fired up the BBQ when we got back to the hut where we were joined by Howard Shaw and Jill Hodge. All were fed grandly with top class burgers and sausages, washed down with copious amounts of wine.

The evening was rounded off with much storytelling and a good old singsong with Dave knocking out a few of his favourite songs on his guitar. By popular demand Fry-up, supported by Leanne in her famous parrot suit, performed her flamenco routine obviously making yet another bid for Lush of the Year!

Another fabulous event and I hope to see even more attending next year.

Karen



Well you wouldn't drown with those would you Caroline!



A Weekend in Wales with a Groovy Gang!

As recalled by **Matt Reed**

2019's Chester Hut Swap weekend saw 8 of us head to North Wales on a dry and bright Friday afternoon. As meet



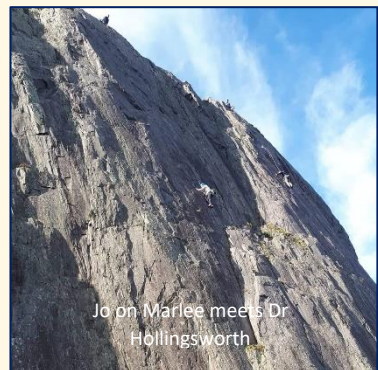
Tony on plastic soldier

lead I arrived early, and after some confusion with keys and codes managed to gain entry to the hut, which is a few hundred yards up the main path from Llanberis to Snowdon. In the afternoon I jogged up to a damp and streaky Cloggy and back. Woody and Hal headed straight to Gogarth and climbed Lighthouse Arete Direct at

Castell Helen, a two starred VS which they both thoroughly enjoyed!

Martin Dale, Jo Leadbetter, Tony Hulme and Rebecca Hicks arrived during the evening after varying degrees of delay on the A55, along with Al Blackburn who brought his bike with him! Food was consumed from various places before we convened in the Heights for some ale and a natter. Tales were told and plans hatched before we walked back up the hill to a cosy fire.

Forecast for Saturday was good, (dry, bright, if a little chilly). Al B headed off in his car to find a long, big hill to ride

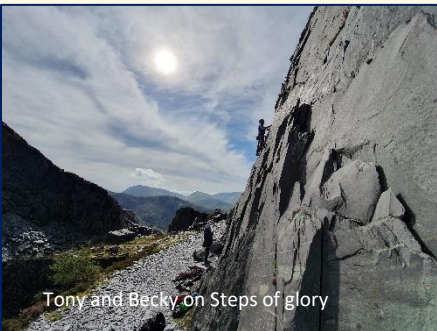


Jo on Marlee meets Dr Hollingsworth

up and Woody and Hal set off into the Pass for Woody's benchmark Cemetery Gates. The remaining 5 headed to

shelter from the breeze in Dinorwic and made a beeline to Above the Rails Sector in Australia, where Tony and Martin led a few short, pleasant routes on angular quarried slate including Groovy Gang and Steps of Glory.

We then headed up to the fantastic Skyline Buttress where the routes are of a different nature as the rock is weathered and higher. I followed Tony up Plastic Soldier after Becky made a valiant effort and Martin and Jo climbed the fabulous Ruby Marlee meets Dr Holingsworth! Kudos to Jo as she was getting back into climbing after breaking her finger and the route looked hard but I think it's fair to say



the Dinorwic team all had a great day out.

With clag forecast for Sunday we were determined to make the most of Saturday evening and eventually all met up at the Heights where the beer was poor, but with the welcome addition of Phil and Clare Lee to the group. Al B had been out for some posh nosh in

Llanberis following his bike ride, Dave and Hal had ticked off Cemetery Gates again, with the added bonus of watching some impressive climbing by strong teams on Cromlech test pieces.

Although a short weekend, it was a good one, in a great hut with great company. Thanks all, see you next year?

Matt



“A Different kind of Challenge...”

This is my journey with Prostate Cancer, the second most common cancer in men; over 47,000 cases will be diagnosed this year in the UK alone! My intention is simply to raise awareness of this disease – and that.....

EARLY DIAGNOSIS IS KEY TO SURVIVAL!!

Now this is not the usual FMC journal article – you know; “we set of on Thursday, got there of Friday, climbed a lot, drank beer and came home ...” it’s also mainly (and unashamedly) for the blokes.

Now I’m not the archetypal candidate for ill health; my body mass index is bordering on anorexic, I run a lot, walk a lot, climb a bit, drink hardly at all and have a very healthy diet. So I guess I’m a prime candidate for denying slowly developing symptoms.

In my case it started with increasingly painful ejaculation (yes even pensioners do ‘IT’). You keep telling yourself ‘it can’t be much, it will soon disappear’ etc. etc. But it didn’t.

Now the usual symptoms of prostate cancer are well publicised (see <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/prostate-cancer/symptoms/>). However, my symptoms did not seem to be that common, so I guess I could be excused for being somewhat ‘blind-sided’. Anyway, after months of procrastination I saw the doctor. A blood test showed a raised PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) level, an indicator of possible prostate cancer amongst many other things. A month of antibiotics ruled out infection as the cause – my PSA was further increased, so the Dr booked me in for a biopsy.

Getting the bad news is an ordeal, but the NHS staff were brilliant. They talked through the deluge of information, and kept it as light and positive as possible. Prostate cancer is apparently very slow growing in its early stages, indeed many men have it without ever knowing, but remember....

EARLY DIAGNOSIS IS KEY TO SURVIVAL!!!

Thankfully, my cancer was at a relatively early stage, however, the chat from the specialist nurse is liberally sprinkled with 'possible' and 'probable', which is a bit disconcerting.

Treatment options can vary from "active surveillance" (just monitor the cancer to see if / how it is progressing), through a range of potentially curative options; surgery, radiotherapy, ultrasound, cryotherapy, etc., to non-curative treatment, "watchful wait", aimed at prolonging life or relieving symptoms. As my cancer was still contained within the prostate gland the likelihood of a full cure is quite high. I was given the 'luxury' of choosing between surgery (just cut it out!) and radiotherapy (kill it in situ with X rays!), which in my case have about the same survival rate.

After loads of support from my family and the NHS staff. I eventually chose radiotherapy; not an easy decision, as both options have different short term impact and 'potential' long term side effects. I need to give a special mention to the excellent charity Prostate Cancer UK. They put me in touch with two men who had been through the two treatment options and were willing to talk candidly about their experiences – this was unbelievably helpful.

My treatment started with 3 months of hormone therapy. Prostate cancer 'feeds' on the hormone testosterone. A series of injections cause ones testosterone level to drop thus 'starving' the cancer, shrinking it and making it easier to target. For someone of slender build these injections are quite disconcerting, involving a large needle depositing a 'pellet' of chemicals under the skin of your belly. As the nurse said, gazing down on my meager torso, holding a needle the size of a bike pump, "there's not a lot to work with here.....". A side effect of the injections is regular and irritating 'hot flushes' – yes similar to female menopause flushes, although my dear wife assures me 'nothing like the "real thing"' – yeh, right! The side effects should start to fade after 6-12 months.

The number of radiation doses varies depending on the severity of the cancer. In my case it involved 20 trips to the excellent Rosemere Cancer Centre, spread over 4 weeks. During each visit I was given a short burst of X Ray radiation, carefully directed at the prostate area. Each dose only lasts a few minutes and is completely painless. The technology is absolutely awesome, the processes really slick and the staff utterly professional – what more can I say!

When my treatment finished I got to ring the 'end of treatment' bell at the Rosemere! A tradition that always draws a round of applause from those in the waiting room – very satisfying!

I managed to keep fairly active during treatment. A temporary (thankfully) side effect was frequent bouts of diarrhea. So I kept to activities reasonably close to a loo – bouldering, short walks, fishing, music and gardening. The problem subsided after 3 weeks or so, and things seem to be returning to normal.

It's been a long journey; 12 months so far, but it takes quite some time to determine if the treatment has been fully successful. I've had two post treatment checkups to date and, so far, it's looking good. I'll be having regular test for the rest of my life, just to check for any recurrence.....
Just remember;

EARLY DIAGNOSIS IS KEY TO SURVIVAL!!!

I've dared to start thinking about a trip to the Cairngorms in March; and the Alps next summer possibly!

Tony Jackson
Secretary



Chamonix-an Alpine Playground



Manhattan Grand Floria Index-Nick

The Chamonix valley in the French Alps has long been a popular climbing venue for British climbers. It's probably best known for long multi day mixed alpine routes but there is lots of lower level rock climbing at all standards so it would make a good venue for an FMC meet.

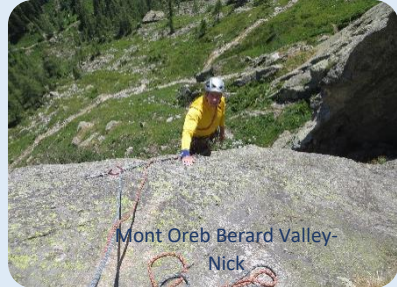
The best times are mid-June until mid-September. Early in the season care is needed depending on the amount of snow. July & August are the best but it is busy, the valley is a tourist honey pot. Be aware that an early start is needed to make sure you get down in time for the last cable car or before dark! It is crucial to have appropriate insurance to cover Rescue, medical & repatriation costs. I use the Austrian Alpine Club.

It's best to camp, allowing flexibility if the weather is bad & it's the cheapest. I've used a site called Les **Chosalets** in **Argentiere** <http://www.campingchamonix.com/>. Pricing is reasonable.

Getting to Chamonix – by car allows you to take lots of camping gear etc., using the trains/buses reduces your CO2 footprint, or you can fly to Geneva & either hire a car or get a transfer to the valley. You do not need a car in the valley as there is a good public transport system.

'The weather can be variable so checking the forecast regularly is important.'

Guides – There is a Rockfax selected guide if you must. The best ones are the local **Piolat** definitive guides. They are smaller & in English. There are two to the **Aiguilles Rouges** & a series of 3 newish Mont Blanc granite guides. Needlesport have them.



The weather can be variable so checking the forecast regularly is important. The best site is

https://www.meteoblue.com/en/weather/week/chamonix_france_3027301.

The guides' office puts up a forecast each day & also has up to date information about routes & snow conditions. Also check the Alpine Club website.

Supplies – If coming by car it's best to stock up in one of the larger supermarkets in **Sallanches** There are plenty of other shops in both **Chamonix** & **Argentiere**.



Dining & Drinking – There are lots of bars & restaurants. For beer try the **Micro Brasserie** or **Big Mountain Brewing Company** in Chamonix. Both do food. **Poco Loco** is a very good & relatively cheap burger joint.

Gear – Many routes are fully bolted so a rack of quick draws, a couple of slings & a daisy chain for descent is enough. Some need a partial or full rack. The guide books usually tell you what the score is. Generally, I recommend double ropes, a helmet, head torch, sun tan cream, sun glasses (category 4), a small sack to put food, water & wind proof in. You'll need an abseil device & it's best to carry approach shoes if the descent is a walk or scramble down. In some cases, & especially when doing routes from a hut, you may need an ice axe & possibly crampons, check the guide, the hut warden & maybe the guide's office.

The climbing –You need to be acclimatised to the altitude & the sun so don't be too adventurous. There are lots of valley crags such as Les **Gaillands**, **Servoz** & **Vallorcine**, grades range from 4a to 6c.

A good starting point is **The Cheserys** above **Argentiere**. There are lots of climbs up to 6 pitches 5b – 6a+. It faces south & isn't too high. A couple of years ago Nick Hepburn & I did a few routes on here & the best was probably Un Pere Noel pour Lucy. This was 5 pitches up to 6a & deservedly got 3 stars. Descent was by abseil.



Frisson Roche and East face The Brevant-Nick



Vipere au Pied on Bareine-Eric Mckenna Parker

Some longer routes more akin to the Lakes or Scotland can be found on **Barberiene** & in the **Berard Valley**. Here the climbs tend to be 6 – 10 pitches. The grading here is alpine i.e. D, TD or ED with individual technical

pitch gradings. On the **Lower Tier** of the **South Face** of **Mont Oreb** Nick & I in 2018 did Into the Wild a superb 350 metre TD inferior, fully bolted.

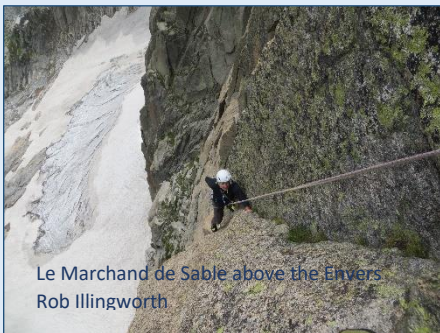
'a walk down into Switzerland then back into France.'

I've done a few of the longer climbs on the impressive **Barbereine** cliff. It's a short walk in, faces south & descent is a walk down into Switzerland then back into France. Probably the best & the hardest was **Vipere au Pied** in 2019 with Eric McKenna Parker. This was a 250 metre TD Sup with climbing up to 6b+. It was sustained & hot but superb.

The Aiguille Rouge offer lots of options where the climbs can be accessed by cable car & a walk. The two main areas are the **Brevent** & the **Index**. In 2017 Nick & I did **Frison Roche** on the **East Face of** the Brevent (2525 metres). We descended from the top cable car & joined the queue. This was a fantastic classic in a superb situation. There are also other climbs.

To get to the Index climbs take the Flegere cable car then the Index chair lift. There are lots of cliffs & mountains to do from here with grades from 3 upwards. In 2018 Nick & I did **Manhattan** on the **Grande Floria** a 3-star 5 pitch TD 6a. On another day we went to the **Tour des Crochues** & did **Atom Crochue** another 3-star 5 pitch climb, a little harder & more sustained at 6b. It was another superb day out.

On the opposite side of the Chamonix valley there is a range of reasonably accessible routes on the **Peigne**, the **'M'** and the **Blatiere (Red**



Pillar)

I've barely

scratched

the surface. In summer 2017 Nick & I got the cable car to the **Plan de L'Aiguille** & walked over rough ground to the **Red Pillar** & did the classic **Nabot-leon** a 170 metre TD 5c. It would be good to bivi for



a few nights to avoid repeated cable car costs & the early morning queue with those going up to the top of the Aiguille du Midi.

In summer 2019 I stayed at the **Envers Refuge** for a couple of nights with friends Eric & Rob. We got the train to **Montenvers** then descended the ladders to the **Mer de Glace**. It's a 3-hour approach and you have to like ladders! The refuge is

excellent & caters well for vegetarians. Dinner, bed & breakfast was 50 Euros a night payable in cash.

We did a route that's been on my tick list for many years, [Le Marchand de Sable](#). It's 330 metres TD & 6a+. We left the hut early around 7.30 – 8 am & crossed the easy angled snow field to the bergschrund at the foot of the route in under an hour. An axe would have been useful! There were a couple of teams in front of us but they moved fast. Climate change has caused the snow field to melt so the climb now starts around 10 metres lower than it used to! This was a stunning route in a real mountain setting. It was sustained in both difficulty & quality. Descent was by abseil.

If you want to see the effects of climate change visit the [Mer de Glace](#). I climbed here 30 years ago on some slabs that started from the glacier but the glacier is now at least 30 metres lower.

I've tried to give a flavour of the rock climbing this wonderful area has to offer. There are many places I have not mentioned but which are equally well worth a visit. It would be great to see a decent turnout for a meet in August 2020.

Andy Dunhill & Nick Hepburn



[Mont Oreb Berard Valley-Nick](#)

[Le Marchand de Sable above the Envers-Rob ilingworth](#)



CRAGS, CLIMBS, MIDGES, BEER AND CURRY—YES IT'S THE EVENING CLIMBS 2019!

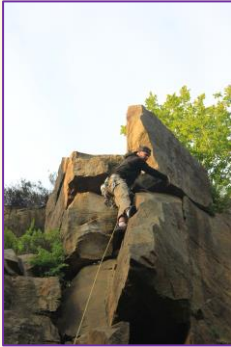
Report by Martin Dale

This would be the first year out climbing in the evenings as a retired person! Would I get out more often? Guess time would tell.

The season didn't get off to a good start with the first meet to Denham being cancelled due to rain. However, a team of us had already snook out there a couple of weeks earlier on a climbing wall night and enjoyed a warm sunny evening. In fact I actually did a new route (well, new to me!). So, the first official meet was to Trowbarrow. A good bunch of us did some interesting stuff, including a couple of new ones for me, which is a rarity. We had beer in the Woodlands, which wasn't a rarity!

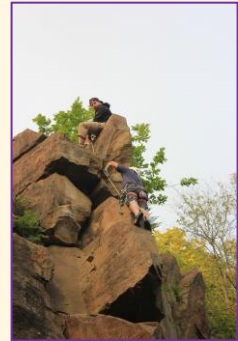
I missed the next couple of meets due to being on Kalymnos. However, folks did visit Troy and Wilton 3 on the appointed nights. Anglezarke was next up and the conditions were good! That means dry, sunny, warm and no midges! I took Craig Hargreaves up Samarkand, which proved much harder than I remembered. Surely worth HVS! The next three meets were cancelled due to rain. We weren't doing very well! It was now June! However, we did manage to squeeze in a visit to a new crag for all of us! Noggarth, near Barrowford has had a recent clean up and had also been re-equipped with pegs, bolts

and lower offs. A good crew of us, including new members, Alec Peacock and Peter Wilson turned up and gave it a good coat of looking at. The verdict, yes well worth a visit but it is not in the sun in the evening. What happened next was also becoming a bit of a usual occurrence. A good forecast and a few fine days, so Steve Clark suggested we meet up at Lancaster Park and ride and head to Yorkshire or South Lakes. Bigger that thought Steve. It's only 45 minutes up the motorway



and across to Bram Crag in St. John's in the Vale, let's go there! So we did! We managed 3 routes, and pints in the Eagle and Child in Staveley on the way home. What a good night! We swapped the next meet to the next night again due to the weather, but as usual, Robin Proctor's Scar above Clapham did not disappoint. Old club member Paul Clarke turned up, so I did some routes with him. A big team took advantage of the good but midgy conditions.

Into July now, and a meet disguised on the syllabus as to Moughton Nab, was in fact a trespass into that other crag just over the moor there! Getting in wasn't so bad but the crag has suffered from lack of use over the last few years. Four of us did manage several routes before being repelled by bad light, and midges from hell. The next couple of meets also fell foul of the great British summer weather. So, it was to Round Barn again for the second time for us. The elusive



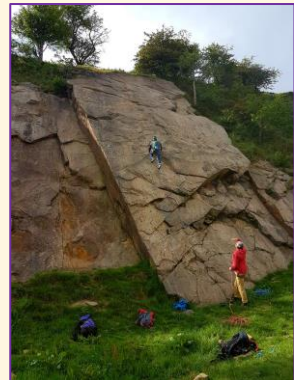
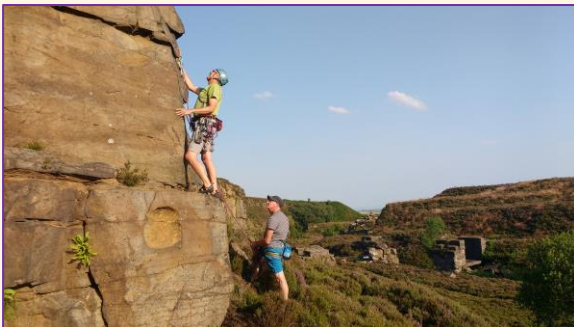
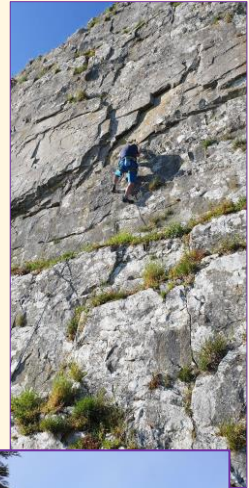
Iggi Moore put in an appearance, but left before we got there! So, we didn't see him on actual rock. The routes here are a little pokey for the grade. We did a few mostly easy things before John Hickman sat on his broddler and severely lacerated his hand, putting our visit to the pub in jeopardy. I managed to lead Last Straw, surely worth E1 in my book.

Nobody went to Hutton Roof, so I'm not putting it on the syllabus again, Karen Hicks! I do believe you went, but not on the appointed date. Wilton was cancelled due to rain, so the next meet to run was Warton Main. Tony Hulme had his eye on the recently bolted route left of Third World (now named as Gravy Bones). I led the first dodgy pitch, then Tony duly dispatched the main pitch in superb style. Well worth checking out if you are up to it. The nights are drawing in at this time of year, so when we visited Lower Montcliffe we really only had time for the one route. A couple of lads were just leaving

when myself and John arrived, but they did point us at, in their opinion the route of the quarry. Step Left doesn't get any stars in the guide but it certainly deserves some! A bit of a fight and a dodgy top out but it was one of the routes of the year for me. Slow Nick arrived in time to tie on. We visited the excellent Blackedge brewery tap afterwards for well-earned reward.

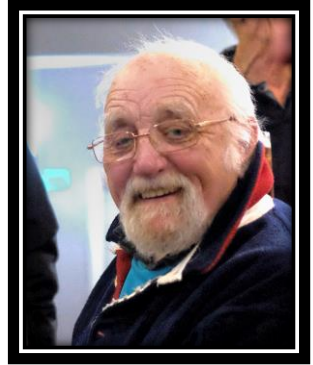
The season ended with the usual trip to Denham, then a curry in The Red Lion, Wheelton. Some of us managed a couple of routes before the curry, including Mohammed. The best route of its grade in Lancashire? More non climbers attended for the curry than on any other meet of the season! What does that tell you? I would like to thank the regulars who make nearly all of the meets. Hope to see more of you on this year's meets!

MARTIN



My memories of Alan Bell

with Doug Brown



I first met Alan in Troutbeck Youth Hostel at Christmas 1953. Along with a mate, I had hitchhiked from Blackpool, arriving at our destination with a final lift on the back of an open lorry. The hostel was full, but Alan stood out as a man with a bubbling personality and plenty of confidence, both qualities which I lacked but admired. I was 16 years old. Alan was a little older.

We only got to know each other in 1958 when, after returning from National Service in the army, I was given a lift from Blackpool to the club cottage by Billy Haywood in his Austin 7. Alan also had transport, a Ford van, which he used in his job selling washing machines and vacuum cleaners for Hoover. It was door to door selling and very hard work. He progressed through several jobs before attaining a good position with Harvey's the wine merchants in Bristol, where he remained until he retired. Anyone who had transport in those days was a valuable friend. On entering the club cottage for the first time it felt to me like entering the gates of paradise. It was buzzing with all sorts of interesting characters. It was also quite scruffy though charming, and with an open fire roaring away. After that first weekend I gladly suffered many lifts to the Lakes bouncing about in the back of Alan's van. I was frequently sick.

I climbed with Alan a reasonable number of times. He was a very competent though nervy climber. He smoked as he climbed, quite common in those days! I remember once leading a fairly awkward climb on Shepherds crag. I belayed at the top and Alan followed up with a lot of grunting and complaining and smoke rising from below. For a young man, at that time, he was unusual in that he rarely or never swore. As he came over the top with a broken cigarette still smouldering in his mouth he called me something which still amuses me to this day. Happy times!

In the early 1960's Alan discovered the athletic passion of his life, skiing. He became very good and naturally our climbing contacts receded. Some years later Dorothy and I joined him in Bormio, Italy on many happy occasions. Initially this was with Heywood's Happy Holidays (Gordon Heywood), but later with a smaller group. Driving to Bormio from the airport there was a memorable occasion when both Alan and Gordon, with their shaky hands, tried to pour whiskies for each other as the coach was moving at speed. Needless to say not a drop was spilt but the entertainment was great.

He was a man with an enormous range of interests. Most of all was his skill and success as a folk singer which was to bring him widespread acclaim. In the early days at Little Langdale he was able to get a tune out of his guitar and his squeezebox, and we all enjoyed the range of songs he sang. In later years he was always a regular at the Old Lags Annual reunion at Stair in November. The event was just too good to miss, and still is!

Alan was a kind and generous man. He was the sort of man who, when it came to buying a round in the pub at the end of the evening, you always seemed to owe him a drink. I just hope I was able to put the balance right in later life. Like most of us at that time no one gave Alan a leg up in life. Everything he achieved he did so by his own efforts and he achieved a lot. I would make only one exception to this and that is to say that the best bit of luck Alan had in his whole life was meeting Christine who, of course, became his wife. They were a remarkable team.

Alan was a passionate supporter of the FMC and without doubt, the Club played an important part in shaping his life. In later years when age gradually slowed him down his mind remained sharp and he was always planning some venture or other. Quite amusingly some of us felt he reached the stage where he was better at moving on skis than he was at walking!

Alan gave a lot in any friendship and took very little. He was the ultimate enthusiast. He also told many good stories, often embellished with his own imagination, but always well worth a hearing. He once had the misfortune to have a very disagreeable Aussie boss who loved sarcasm. In one encounter with this individual, after being on the receiving end of the guy's tongue, Alan reached in his pocket and, with a smile, placed a black patch in the palm of the man's hand (the old pirate routine for giving someone the death sentence!). The man was too stupid to understand the meaning but everyone else in the meeting did and it brought the roof down.

Alan was an honest and loyal friend. He never made enemies, he just made friends. Alan, I have to admit I miss your cheerful presence very much, and I have to say that you made my life and that of numerous others all the richer for knowing you. You lived a good life. Thank you, mate.

Doug



WHAT'S NEW.....

Have you snapped a great photo of Wildlife or Nature on your days on the Fells?

Or.....

Have you had such a superb day it's inspired you to write some verse.....

Email me with your photos or verse—chris.paddy61@gmail.com

Info for submitting articles.

Only original photos with a best setting on the camera please-this is better for printing!

Photos sent in a separate email.

PLEASE could you submit your articles no later than 2 weeks after the meet. It is a lot of work if they all come in at once and this may delay publication of the mag, also you will remember it better!

Many thanks

Ed.

The FMC are members of Friends of the Lake District and The Snowdonia Society, why not have a look on their websites for projects, events, History campaigns, conservation work etc.

www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk

www.snowdonia-society.org.uk

The Fylde Mountaineering Club

Is affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council.



www.fyldemountaineeringclub.org

A Fell, Feast and Fun!

**Fell Race October
12th 2019**



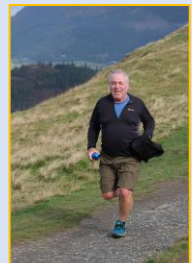
There was a really good turnout for the Annual Fell Race with a few new faces there which was fortunate as a few of the usual suspects could not make it.

The weather was absolutely perfect which was surprising with the awful wet weather for a solid week leading up to the weekend. Our usual handicap officer (Mark Broughton) could not make it this year, and so with some later controversy your Chairman took on the responsibility. There was usual pre-race sharing of ailments but as tradition dictates, all these excuses fell on deaf ears.

Handicaps allotted, everyone set off, some with more enthusiasm than others and a couple of “dark horses” decided to walk round much of the way (allegedly!). The competitors start and finish times were managed by Richard Duerden who sporting a genuine injury agreed to be the timekeeper. Simon Fenna and Carol Williamson came up for the weekend but did not take part in the run, they did however go for a walk

along the descent route to take pictures and generally make fun of the exhausted competitors on their way down.

Everyone arrived back safe 'n' sound and



adequately exhausted and we were all treated to Christine's famous pea and ham soup, bread and drizzle cakes. As is the usual custom after lunch, people went into Keswick to make sure the local gear shops would not be in danger

of going out of business, and then to check out the hostelrys for pre-evening meal drinks, to congratulate each other and, make that promise once more to do better next year.

The evening entertainment began with banter questioning the ethics of the handicap setter being the overall winner. In my defence I ran 5 minutes quicker than I have in all the years I have been taking part, so I slept soundly and with a clear conscience. Next, followed the real main event – the curry evening which was a Beef Rendang cooked by yours truly, served with mushroom rice, basmati rice, poppadums and naans and washed down with some of the Chairman’s best home-made red wine. Desert was a good old Lancashire favourite, bread and butter pudding made by Fry-Up.

The after-dinner speech and results were performed by Richard who gave a splendid summary our athletic achievements and presented the prizes. This was followed by many tales of derring-do and excuses for disappointing performances one of which may qualify for mug of the year, more at the Annual Dinner! There was then a good old sing song and a repeat

performance by popular demand of Fry-Ups devilish flamenco dance routing supported at one point by our very own Raging Bull, Pete Wilson.

A fantastic time was had by all and this is as much a social weekend as anything, so for those who may be put off by the title of Fell Race weekend please give it a go next year.

Dave

Fell Race runners and results

	Time	Position (Handicap)	Handicap	
Fastest Male	52	5	0	Matt Reed
Fastest Female	58	4	0	Alex Ashworth
	64	2	20	Karen Hicks
	65	3	12	Leanne Sutton
First Back - Winner	69	1	28	Dave Hicks
	70.30	6	22	Peter Wilson
	71	7	22	Alec Peacock
	71	7	22	Martin Dale
	99	9	22	Geoff Brindle
	112	10	45	Christine Fry-Up Fry
	117	11	45	Caroline Webb
	143	12	45	Howard Shaw
	143	12	45	Jill Hodge
	76		45	Valia (guest)
	76		45	Summer (guest)



Cheers!



Some welcome post Fell food



Hubble bubble toil and trouble



And the dancing starts!



Up she goes!



Turning Martin?



Getting ready for the off!



Not making a Boobie of it are you Dave?



Langdale Pikes from Chapel Stile Photo: Christine Fry