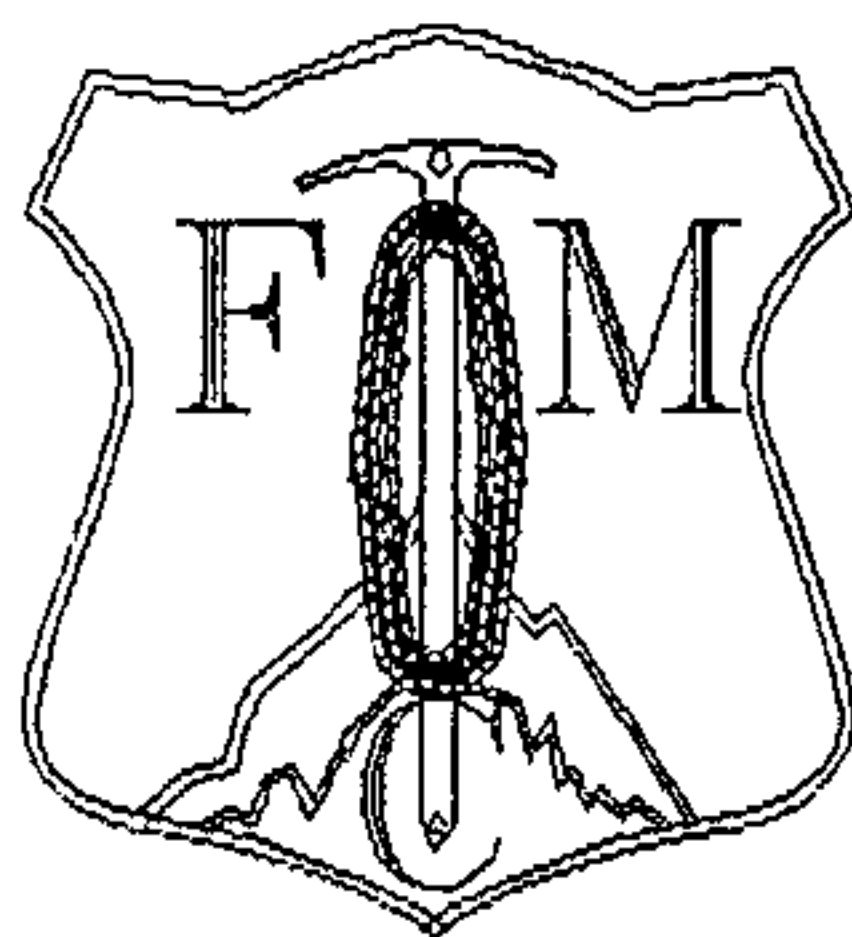


*FYLDE
MOUNTAINEERING
CLUB*



*NEWSLETTER
February
1991*

EDITOR RETIRES!

Sadly, Steve Halton has informed the Committee that he can no longer produce the Club's newsletter since he has lost access to a word processor and is severely restricted in matters of transport.

The Committee would like to thank Steve for all the hard work he has done and congratulate him on doing such a good job to improve the appearance and style of the newsletters. His will be a hard act to follow!

ACTING EDITOR TRIES!

In order to produce this newsletter, the Committee have appointed me acting Editor. I now realise just how much hard graft is really involved!

The work is, however, compensated by being able to read accounts of members' trips in their hand-written form. These seem to convey more of the spirit behind the words than probably filters through in the typed versions.

Records of the so far unpublished Club meets from last year have been arranged in chronological order with accounts of other trips following. Meet Leaders who find that there is no record of their endeavours have only themselves to blame. Hopefully, accounts of the missing meets will be published in the next newsletter.

It may be evident from reading most of the articles in this newsletter that, in addition to humour, the enthusiasm for "being on the hill" provides a common thread which runs through the wide range of activities represented. The fact that this enthusiasm is common to all types and levels of activity ensures that the Club retains the wide and non-elitist perspective which has seen it through the last forty years.

In many ways, the diversity of the newsletter can be regarded as being a good indicator of the Club's potential long-term health since, in evolutionary terms, over-specialization leads to eventual extinction (as does poor publicity).

In short, the number and variety of articles which you submit for each newsletter will contribute directly to the overall well-being of the Club over the next forty years. So let's have them! The more variety

the better! Whether about walking, running, mountain biking, parapenting, caving, skiing, climbing diffs., climbing E9s, winter climbing, alpine climbing, himalayan climbing, or the sub-cultures which surround them; all will be published.

In case I get the job of producing another newsletter (hopefully at quarterly intervals), those considering writing something should note that it is easier to type it over three months than it is to do so in two weeks! So don't wait until the last moment! Get it written down today!

John Tattersall

MUG OF THE YEAR

A number of prospective candidates have already emerged in contention for this prestigious award:

Dave Cundy is rapidly becoming adept at landing in trees with his parachute.

Dave Wood arranged with some others to go climbing in Italy over the New Year. Dave made all the arrangements but unfortunately arrived a day late, having missed his flight from England.

Not only did Steve Halton forget the Mug on his way to the dinner and have to drive all the way back to Preston to get it, he drove his car firmly into a wall on the Sunday. He's obviously missing the prize already! Some members have suggested that the club makes a special life-time award to Steve to give everybody else a fair chance at competing for the annual one.

A bit out of character for Mr. Dale, at 10.29pm he asked the barman in the Swinside what time last orders were. On hearing the barman say 11.00pm, Martin pointed out that it was Sunday - The barman looked puzzled for a moment and then tolled the bell! Martin was not the most popular person that night.

WAINRIGHT

For those of you who have read his books, he will be missed, but not forgotten.

CLUB DETAILS

Introductory Members

The Club extends a warm welcome to:

Martin and Gayle Andrew, 131 Higher Meadow, Clayton-le-Woods,
PR5 2PP Tel. 0772 455 937

Paul Hensey, 18 St Annes Rd. East, St. Annes FY8 1LL

Roy Allen Ruddle, c/o The Middlings Sevenoaks TN13 2NM

Alison Irwin, 28 Earle St. Lancaster LA1 2AF Tel 0524 64621

Cliff Baron, c/o 16 Balmoral Terrace Fleetwood

Margaret Scott (nee Jowett), Station Rd. Denholme Bradford
Tel. 213435

Mike Walsh, "Redcot" Marshes Lane, Mere Brow, Tarleton, Preston
Tel. 0704 821362

David Bibby, 19 Kinnerton Place, Anchorholme FY5 3DS
Tel. 824137

Wolf Guettler, 58 Badgers Walk, Lytham

Some introductory members meets are occasionally held as advertised in the club syllabus and in the outdoor meets section of this newsletter. But don't wait till then! The club goes out on the hill somewhere every weekend. Just ring the booking secretary, or see the "nobs" in the Thatched House, Poulton, first room on the right, after 9.30pm on Wednesday nights (occasional social events permitting).

See you next weekend!

Full Members

The Committee officially acknowledges that the following individuals have, in the past year, distinguished themselves by being; no worse than the existing members / prompt at paying their subs. / good company / willing hands on working weekends / single / not bad on rock / capable of finding their way over the hills and even, in some very rare cases, combinations of more than six of the above - the first criterion being relatively easy!

John Bailey
 Geoff Forrest
 Blair Rodgers
 Frank Towne
 Peter Brierly
 Brian & Janet Wilkinson (rejoined) 19 Larkholme Parade Fleetwood
 FY7 8LL
 Steward Sykes (rejoined) 11B West Drive Blackpool FY3 9HT
 Tel 61598

See you on the hill!

Change of Address/Status

Ray Varley, "Hurstwood", 6, Eden, LYTHAM. FYB 5BS
 Chris Wade, 60, Bramhill Close, Gorse Court, WARRINGTON WA3 6TZ
 Tel, 0925 831176
 Brita Warhurst 8, Donegal Close, Caversham RG4 0DT
 Sue Lovejoy is now, and has been for some time, Sue Whithnell
 Congratulations!

Hut Availability

For those who didn't get the recent fact sheet, here's the relevant bit:

| | | |
|-------|-----|-----------------------|
| 8/9 | Feb | Stair |
| 15/16 | Feb | Langdale |
| 22/23 | Feb | Stair |
| 1/2 | Mar | Vags. Hut, Nant Peris |

| | | |
|-------|-----|---------------------------------|
| 8/9 | Mar | Stair (Langdale Family Weekend) |
| 15/16 | Mar | Langdale |
| 22/23 | Mar | Stair |
| 29 | Mar | |
| - 4 | Apr | Langdale |
| 5/6 | Apr | Stair |
| 12/13 | Apr | Langdale |
| 19/20 | Apr | Stair |
| 26/27 | Apr | Langdale |

Outdoor Meets

Casual meets:

Every weekend: Refer Thatched House on Wednesdays, after 9.30pm (occasional Wednesday socials permitting) or telephone a Committee Member.

Official Meets:

| | | |
|--------|-----|---|
| 9-10 | Feb | Caving, Ingleton (Steve Halton) Tel. daytime 0772 267236 |
| 13 | Feb | A.G.M. River Wyre Hotel 7.30pm |
| 16-17 | Feb | Lagangarbh (Mike Tolley) |
| 2-3 | Mar | Vags Hut, Nant Peris (Dave Kwik) |
| 9-10 | Mar | Family Weekend Langdale |
| 16-17 | Mar | Kenmore, Loch Tay (John Parker) |
| 30 | Mar | |
| - 1 | Apr | S.W. Rock (Dave Dundy) |
| 14 | Apr | Coach, Derbyshire (Dave Kwik) |
| 20-21 | Apr | Intro Meet, Stair (John Hickman) |
| 27-28 | Apr | Working W/E, Langdale |
| Easter | | Sun Rock - Spain/Med (Dave Wood) |

Club Buisness

The hut rules have been amended by the Committee so that smoking is only allowed in the common room areas. You can't even have a crap in peace nowadays! Hopefully, this rule and the others will seldom require enforcement, provided that smokers are considerate (even in the common

room), and that all members remain aware that there are more ways than one to cloud the atmosphere. In any case, what happens on the hill is ultimately what we're about!

Data Protection Act

The following paragraph was omitted from the end of the section dealing with the data protection act contained in the recent circular giving notice of the A.G.M.:

"If you do not wish your name and address to be given out in any or all of the ways described above, you should notify the Membership Secretary in writing".

At the January committee meeting, several members expressed reservations about:

The possibility of people being sent junk mail;

the long-term effect of the BMC's plan for mandatory civil liability insurance on the future and spirit of British Mountaineering; and,

the effect of the change from £50 a year voluntary insurance for the whole club to a £2 a head charge for BMC membership with the mandatory insurance.

Derek Walker, the BMC national officer has assured the FMC that no junk mail would be forwarded to members (except, presumably, BMC junk mail - refer other contents of envelope!).

The mandatory insurance, while viewed with suspicion, is generally regarded as a 'fait accompli'.

The effect of the change to individual subscription would probably mean that people who hadn't paid their subs by January 1st wouldn't be covered, and that there is a possibility that people not included on the list of members submitted to the BMC would also not be covered, even if they had paid the full amount of subs.

Members are cordially invited to express their opinions by letter to the committee. The best ones will be printed in the next newsletter minus any statements considered to be libellous.

Ed.

CORRIS

May

A regular feature of the club syllabus is the visit to the Coventry M. C. hut at Corris. This year mid-May was booked and a good team was booked in. The rendezvous was the Slaters Arms in Corris which had both Bank's Mild and Bank's Bitter of such quality that I had to sample both.

Saturday started with the presentation of a cake with a large number of candles to 'Major' John. Phil Morris, a native, and champion cake eater was suggesting routes and correcting our pronunciation of place names.

The climbers sampled several crags. The walkers started from Castell y Bere and went up the pony path. The weather was so good, we could admire the views, the wildlife and sunbathe. We walked the less populated hills to the west of Cader Idris which was the right move judging by the crowds we could see on Cader. One of the highlights was the ten minutes or so watching a Red Kite flying around, another was the long wait in the sun for Donald to catch us up after adding Cader to his route.

Sunday was again a fine day, Dave Earle and Mike Penn opted for a walk across the Rhinogs from Barmouth to Trawfynydd, with Carol as support in the car. Donald joined us for a more leisurely walk on the Rhinogs. The climbers headed for Craig Cowarch. The aim was to swap passengers at Frodsham, and it was quite late by the time everyone had arrived. A good weekend.

John Wiseman

VAGS HUT

June

There was talk on Friday night of early starts, classic routes and good weather. By Saturday morning Kevin's idea of an early start was different from the rest of his team. Some did not even say "thank you" for their early morning cuppa!

My memories are of a good day walking up Elider Fawr, along to the Glyders, Tryfan and down to Llyn Bochlywd and round under the slabs where we saw Rebecca and Geoff Forest having an enjoyable day on warm rock. Going up the Kitchen we took the rake to the right rather than the

usual route, and frightened ourselves by thinking how many years ago it was since we last went up that way. Descending from Lly y Cwm and into the Vaynol Arms made a good end to the walk. Everyone else also had a good day.

Sunday, although clear, was very windy high up. Geoff Forest set off with Rebecca to Tryfan. We went to the Nantlles, the rest to Pete's Eats and the crags.

John Wiseman

HUT TO HUT

June

People had to be turned away from this meet due to the high demand for places. It transpired that these were the unlucky ones as the event took place during monsoon conditions with accompanying electric storm. The meet leader had the pleasure of driving Mr. Bailey's Volkswagen van loaded to the gunnels with gear to Stair whilst the lucky ones walked.

For some of the more sensible amongst us, ideas of Bowfell Buttress en route were abandoned as the heavens opened and remained open.

Nevertheless, most people marched bravely over the tops whilst the meet leader accompanied the beginners at both ends of the journey, leaving them only the problem of finding their way over Stake Pass.

Saturday night at the Swinside provided the usual hassles, and Sunday found a large number opting for a lift back in the van after walking locally in the vicinity of Stair. Quite a few members nevertheless walked back over the tops thus qualifying as mountaineers of the true breed.

Dave Earle.

Those not so sensible amongst us spent a long time finding the climbers traverse to Bowfell Buttress in thick mist and drizzle. Blair and Geoff scaled the extremely greasy Bowfell Buttress Route, which was no mean task in those conditions.

I learned two valuable lessons on this weekend:

Pitch 5 of Plaque Route appeared to be loose and much harder than Diff., resulting in a devious and insecure scramble for the Tattersall family to the top of the crag. Much effort would have been saved if I'd had the newer guidebook which reports that this pitch now lies below the foot of the buttress! However, our efforts were amply rewarded by the spectacle of Blair and Geoff standing on top of the buttress crowned with a halo of flame - just before the lightning struck! Plans to have lunch on the summit were rapidly abandoned.

Lesson two gradually began to make itself felt on the way from Esk Pike to the top of Gable. It appears that fitness (or lack of it) may be worth considering when contemplating a hut to hut walk after all. By the time we reached Honister Pass we were very glad of a lift from a passing car to the Scafell Hotel, and even more grateful to John Wiseman for the lift back to the Swinside.

Apart from the fatigue, the wild, rapidly changing misty views and dynamic atmosphere provided a rich experience of the kind which I have sorely missed in past few years (as well as the beer).

Ed.

CHESTER HUT

July

Is the FMC the most organised mountaineering club in the Northern Hemisphere? (and the noisiest?!). One could be forgiven for thinking so if recent hut swaps are anything to go by. The weather in Llanberis on this particular weekend was perfect. Hot, sunny, not a cloud in the sky - very fortunate really as the Chester contingent had turned out in force for a working weekend (maybe some of our members could learn something from them after all!).

Sorry about that last comment - just the private musings of a hut custodian. Anyhow, with a combined team numbering about forty people, it was lucky the meet wasn't taking place in November! People upstairs, downstairs on the floor, in cars, under cars, in tents, under the stars, or anything or anyone they could find to sleep under (those unfortunate enough not to have a bed, tent, car or partner had to make do with a sheep).

The whole deal worked out quite amicably, and a super and unusually dry (that is nothing to do with the beer - which flowed as freely as Welsh licensing laws would permit) weekend was enjoyed by all. H'mm, perhaps I should arrange a working weekend at Langdale when the Chester crowd are going there?

Don Nichol.

THE 13th (INTERNATIONAL) FMC FELL RACE

August

For a few days before the race the 'phone was red hot with people booking. Seemingly, Mark Van Gullick was being married in Hawkshead on the Saturday (poor girl!). Drastic action was called for so I upped the order of Hot Dogs by a dozen.

As it turned out the hut was overflowing and there were prospects of a record field until half a dozen or so cowardly types sneaked off with a variety of weak excuses. There were a few new faces to the race, John Tattersall, Nils Tremmel, Judith Swift, Rebecca Hargreaves, Mary Kindred, Jill Harrison etc. and an international contingent in the shape of Christine and Anne-Marie Barbier and Eric the Frenchman!

The weather was reasonable and handicapping proceeded as usual with me determined to be particularly evil but being duped by one or two notables. I slipped up in particular with Mike Penn (having forgotten that he finished first in '87) and he crossed the line first again, beating his last years time by over five minutes.

Scratch men were myself, Henry Iddon, Roger Brooks, Stu Gascoigne, and an unfortunate gent (John Grigg) who was staying in the adjoining cottage and asked to join in. Stu Gascoigne has done a lot of fell racing this year - The Coniston, Wasdale and Borrowdale races to name a few - and he looked like being the fastest all the way. Our Henry has been concentrating on field events but kept pretty close to Stu till near the top of the big climb. Stu also stormed through in the raft race passing an exhausted Martin Dale only yards from the bridge.

After the race the traditional beer and hot dogs were enjoyed thanks to Gill Llewellyn and Chrissie Ikin doing the honours in the kitchen.

A slight hiccup which threatened to mar the apres race atmosphere was the letter I had received from the treasurer after the '89 event. This instructed me to make a "catering charge" of one pound to those persons having "official" refreshment at the race.

Strangely, this idea did not seem at all popular with anyone and was causing distinct signs of indigestion in some quarters. Fortunately we had the Club Secretary, Editor, Vice Chairman and enough Committee members for a quorum and the decision to charge was overruled. Trained Administrator takes on the bureaucrats!

Results in order of crossing the line are given below. See you next year.

Martin Pickup.

| Handicap | | | Actual |
|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------|
| Position | Name | Time | Position |
| 1 | Mike Penn | 47-42 | 11 |
| 2 | Andy Dunhill | 41-44 | 6 |
| 3 | Steve Halton | 44-56 | 9 |
| 4 | Stu Gascoigne | 35-14 | 1 |
| 5 | Michael Dagger | 36-33 | 3 |
| 6 | Henry Iddon | 36-06 | 2 |
| 7 | Phil Morris | 43-27 | 7 |
| 8 | Martin Pickup | 36-53 | 4 |
| 9 | Pete Llewellyn | 47-39 | 10 |
| 10 | Judith Swift | 62-40 | 20 |
| 11 | Christine Barbier | 57-49 | 19 |
| 12 | Mary Kindred | 62-52 | 21 |
| 13 | Jill Harrison | 53-15 | 16 |
| 14 | Don Nichol | 43-39 | 8 |
| 15 | Roger Brooks | 39-22 | 5 |
| 16 | Barrie Crook | 54-28 | 17 |
| 17 | John Tattersall | 67-45 | 22 |
| 18 | Martin Dale | 51-44 | 14 |
| 19 | Nils Tremmel | 49-56 | 13 |
| 20 | Eric the Frenchman (Guest) | 51-56 | 15 |
| 21 | John Grigg (Guest) | 47-47 | 12 |
| 22 | John Parker | 55-22 | 18 |
| 23 | Anne Marie Barbier (Guest) | 72-05 | 23 |
| 24 | Rebecca Hargreaves | 77-05 | 24 |

Not having run more than 200m in the last 18 years I was surprised to finish. Everyone who participated can congratulate themselves for supporting the event.

Ed.

"DRUNK IN CHARGE OF A DONKEY"

August

The Fair Head meet began at 4 p.m. on Friday in Lancaster and if you can guess how many were in attendance I'll tell both their names! A pint in Stranraer and we embarked to the bar and supped Murphy's while watching Back to the Future II. From Larne to Ballycastle the police took a keen interest in our progress which all served to keep the driver awake. It took us too long to locate the site for the tent in a far corner of the Silvercliff Family Holiday Fun Caravan Park, but at 3.45 a.m. we took a short course in death.

We woke to thick mist and drizzle but the natives were friendly and when the mist lifted we could see Fair Head across the bay, impressively fending off Scotland beyond. Once at the cliff top we gasped at the sheer drop, marvelled at the Brocken Spectre and descended the Greyman's path. Our plan was to traverse the steep slopes below the crag to the Ballycastle Descent Gully (BDG) thereby getting a good look at a large section of the main crag while it dried out.

A possible second ascent, the route consisted largely of terrifying leaps across bottomless chasms from one greasy boulder to the next and ploughing through heather and reeds which cunningly disguised other chasms. The crag is mega-impressive, seemingly endless numbers of cracks, corners and grooves up to 100m high but probably only 20% have been climbed. After two hours we turned a corner into the sun and the bottom of the BDG. Here we climbed Girona a 3 star VS, then moved on to The Prow to try Fireball a 3 star E1. I baulked at the initial off-width, having no big gear, so tried the next route along, Midnight Cruiser, another 3 star E1. A shallow groove line gave sustained, technical jamming and bridging with about 150 brilliant runner placements in 40 metres.

Back in Ballycastle we ticked off five of the ten pubs and suffered a compulsory lock-in.

On Sunday morning, nursing slight hangovers, we found Farangandoo, a cliff west of The Prow, where I tried Crib Pad Crack (3 star E1 - yawn) but about halfway up I got frightened so Mike strolled round to give me a top rope. We both found one section quite exacting.

Returning to The Prow I tried Fireball again, armed with a Hex 10 and 3.5 and 4 Friends. I got up the off-width but a bulge above it stopped me. Tolley now believes I'm crap at jamming. Why single out Jamming?! I was lowered off and our hero led Black Thief a mere 2 star VS. I top roped Fireball to retrieve the gear, then it rained so we bombed back to Ballycastle.

The night life was really hotting up now, this being the weekend of the Ould Lammas Fair, a one-time livestock sale but now an excuse to eat junk food and get pissed. We took it easy and only ticked off three more bars, even achieving a near impossible lock-out.

We lowered our sights slightly and aimed at Burn Up, a fantastic groove line we'd spotted on the first day. It was still top of the HVS grade with 3, 5a pitches and 3 stars. A long, steepening groove led to an exciting roof and corner above. The next pitch was steeper but yielded to a bold approach and was superbly protected. I had rope enough left to finish the route so I bridged into the final corner, placed a Friend 4 and laybacked spectacularly to the top. Brilliant.

After lunch we felt ready for another E1 but met an Irish couple who recommended Hurricane, E2 5b. The E1 we'd fancied mentioned an off-width which they said was a bit green today. Hurricane followed a groove, chimney and then crack line up a sheer wall some 60 metres high and 100 metres wide. Impressive territory. By now I'd got the gear sorted; 2 sets of Rocks 1 - 9, various Stoppers and Moacs, 15 tie-offs, 4 tape slings, Friends 0.5 - 4 with extra 2.5 and 3; but after 45 metres I still ran out. Mike thought the first pitch was OK but he'll run out of leaders with comments like that! The second pitch was another jam crack and the route as a whole, totally brilliant.

The Irish couple (one being the sole representative of the Karabiner Club on their meet) suggested some more routes and commented that Tolley should have no trouble with arms like those. Obviously they missed the gut! They told us tales of past Fairs, one character was dragged down the main street by his donkey and charged with being drunk

in charge of a donkey! That evening I was jostled by an old drunk who looked me up and down and blurted out; "D'ya wanna buy a donkey?". I declined on the grounds that it was a meat product.

Tuesday dawned superbly so we went for Blind Pew (E2,5a,5c) a 60 metre right angled corner which had me wimping out before the ropes were even uncoiled. However, I had a go in the end and got hooked. The initial pitch followed a groove a couple of metres left of the main corner (which is 5b and looks really sustained). and proved to be quite entertaining.

The huge stance gave a superb view of the overhanging corner above and I was eager to climb it. Big bridging moves, positive finger locks and stonking protection led, after 15 metres, to a blank groove. A section of smearing and balancy moves took me into the final steep corner where holds seemed to run out. The last 5 metres were the crux. The crack was flared so again I bridged carefully to reach the top of one of the best pitches I've ever led. As Mike followed, I was attacked by swarms of cute black and yellow Ladybirds. When they started biting me, I attacked them!

Feeling somewhat sated I plumped for a post-luncheon HVS, Hells Kitchen. The two superb corner pitches only yielded under severe pressure and the gear was, by Fair Head standards, pretty poor. The last 10 metres were particularly gripping, pushy climbing on hidden holds and ever distant gear.

I'd had enough, but Mike got his top rope on Fireball in the late afternoon sun and we hit double ice creams back in Ballycastle. Then we had a final tour of the Public Housing, got a lock-in at the best of the bunch and waded back to the campsite through the litter of 3,000 visitors.

We awoke to rain so had to scrap our plans for the morning, settling instead for a scenic return to Larne, a wander round T-shirt emporia and a mild panic when I left the car keys in a cafe.

Get your name on the list for next year's visit. There are two names already on it. Fair Head - more 3 star E2's than you can shake a stick at!

Phil Morris

GLENBRITLLE, SKYE

September

Some time ago Andy Dunhill wrote of a weekend trip he made round Scotland which included a traverse of the Cuillin Ridge from north to south in a day. Inspiring stuff by a keen team. And so it was, inspired, that one day on the Skye meet, John Tats, Steve Halton and myself set off to mount the alternative assault on the ridge from south to north. A complete traverse of the ridge by whatever means possible, in however long it took, by a slack team. We did, however, have one overriding objective. We aimed to achieve during the traverse a complete metamorphosis of John Tattersall. He was to start the assault perhaps slightly overweight, mildly unfit and harbouring a constant, insatiable desire for cigarettes; and would finish lean, mean, and having kicked the habit for life. The logic was simple. Perhaps too simple. The trip was going to take at least a day. There would be no cigarette machines en route, and so, once his present supply had run dry, he would be forced into submission. The exercise, fresh air and spectacular scenery would do the rest. And it nearly worked.

Undaunted by the news that a solitary Polish climber had fallen to his death in the mist only a few days earlier, we set off sometime during the afternoon after a healthy breakfast. Travelling light is the only way to fly. We carried only the bare essentials; a four pack of Newcastle Brown, emergency rations of cigarettes in case John suffered any serious withdrawal symptoms, a small compact disc player and some bits of plastic (Robert Cray, Geoff Beck). We felt strong in our mission.

The first night it rained. It was cold, wet, miserable and black. A bit like a Mick Tolley caving trip. And if you've ever shared a bivvy with John you'll know what I mean when I say I didn't get much sleep. Nothing like a little night music. Steve seemed oblivious but I think he was just pretending. Or else dead. Perhaps the guy wouldn't snore so loud when he'd managed to give up smoking. Who could tell.

The next day was brilliant and indescribable after the misery of the night before, so I'll not even try. Somewhere along the road we lost John though, poor soul. I could tell he was cracking when he stopped a passing fell runner and asked him for a smoke. All I remember is that the next minute he was off, gone, ranting delirious about Benson & Hedges. We got to the next easy descent and pointed him downwards towards civilisation. The road to heaven is narrow and steep, the road to hell slippery and wide. We carried on. We did it for John.

That night Steve and I slept out under the stars again. It was getting late and the light was fading. We could make it back if we tried, but up here it was peaceful. We lay down to rest, staying close for warmth. Down in the valley things looked quiet. But we knew better. Back at the hut, John would be sleeping.

Nils Tremmel

INTRODUCTORY MEMBERS MEET, LANGDALE

September

Its been some time now since this meet and, having promised to write something about it, I'm now struggling to remember much that happened. Fortunately I was round at Phil's place the other night, and discovered this book - "The Secret Diary of Philip Morris (mental age 12½)" lying unattended in his front room. I'm sure he won't mind seeing this extract published.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22nd

Dear Diary, well, what a day I've had. Got up and made everybody tea. Muesli for breakfast. Its Saturday, so its raining. Meet leader suggests a stroll up to Dow Crag. Bald git hasn't a clue, but a shopping trip to Coniston sounds reasonable. A few of them stumble up to Dow, and fat man Tolley gets the only route of the day done in howling gales. Thought Les would have more sense though. The rest of us takes the sensible route to Coniston where me and Tats was overcome by this tremendous thirst which seemed to take us all day and a gallon of ale to quench. Not going to do that again this weekend. Took a mighty long while to get back to the hut again what with not feeling very well and all. Beans for tea. Seem to be twice as many people around tonight including the delicious Rebecca. I know she fancies me really. Shame Avril's not shown up though. To the Three Shires for a top up where a good time is had by all and then back for cheese on toast and bedtime stories. Janet got groped in the washroom, but I think I got away with it. Got to bed far too late, what with Rebecca refusing my advances and me having drunk so much and all.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 23rd

Dear Diary, A restless, tormented night's sleep, what with Rebecca sleeping on top of me and me having drunk so much and all. Muesli for breakfast. Weather looks better today and meet leader suggests Raven's Crag in Langdale so some of us head off to Hare Crag in Eskdale. Looks like garbage what with being all soggy and all, so we end up joining the others at Raven's anyway. Team Tolley's done a load of routes already as have Kevin and Gary and John P. and Geoff. Roy the boy proceeds to drag meet leader up (or rather across) Pluto. Bald git still hasn't a clue. Martin and Jerry sidle off to climb something hard and I grasp the opportunity to team up with Mr Earle so ensuring an extreme-free day. Others not to be seen again are team Woods who spent the day shopping somewhere in Eskdale, John H. and Rebecca who probably spent the day buying each other flowers somewhere in Ambleside, Tats and Blair who probably didn't spend the day buying each other flowers somewhere in Ambleside, and Paul and Alison. Maybe it was something I said. What a good time though. A couple more pints in the Rule and then home. Can't wait to do it all again next weekend.

Thanks Phil.

Nils.

FALLCLIFFE

September

As a result of the lock-in at the Moon en route to the hut, several members arrived in an inebriated state. Even though they were unaware that the Hut Custodian Himself was in attendance attempting some kip, the desecration of the Hut Book and prolonged noise from two members and a guest were inexcusable. Ivor Delafield was understandably very annoyed before he left in the morning. Despite one responsible personal apology made by one culprit, the whole incident might well have jeopardised the Club's privileges at Fallcliffe, our base in Derbyshire.

Mind you, the hut ran out of water by Sunday morning, so what water remained in the hot water tank was reserved for washing pots and not bodies. Not that the following weekenders would have suffered as the drought broke for the FMC.

Well, it drizzled persistently. The walkers did some dale walking on both days while the climbers attempted things on Grit, mainly in the Grindleford Station Buffet.

Those attended included; Martin Dale, Paula Helsby, Rebecca Hargreaves, Roy Ruddles, Claire Addy, Phil Morris, John Hickman, Jerry Evans, Phil Caley, Hal Heaney, Paul & Julie Reid, John & June Wiseman, Mike Penn, Carole Webb, Dave Cundy, John & Jenny Parker, Dave Earl, Mark Harding and Glen Brooks. The last two mentioned are reminded to give the treasurer their hut fees if they have not already done so.

John Parker

I quote one who was there; "NOISY!"

'Nuff said!

Don Nichol

Not quite. In the aftermath of this meet, two members were banned for short periods from using the huts and one non-member was requested not to appear at FMC meets or facilities for the foreseeable future.

Whilst not wishing to condone untimely and prolonged noise in huts, I think that it will probably always be an occasional feature of mountaineering life (given the diversity of characters which are normally found within any active and evolving mountaineering club). Such occurrences may indeed require some form of disciplinary action in order to limit their frequency. However, in the league table of the "inexcusable", you have to make a hell of a lot of noise in order to beat the leaving of indelible reminders of FMC visits, especially ones which could be construed as being extremely offensive.

It would seem to me that the generally harmonious and coherent nature of the Club which exists at present is worth preserving, and that a big contribution towards this can be made by members carefully considering the consequences of any extreme or unusual action which they may be contemplating - whether pissed or relatively sober. Unfortunately, this applies even more so when attending a different club's hut where host members could, for some reason, unexpectedly be present.

Ed.

October, 1990

Fourteen and a half members turned up instead of the anticipated twenty (Tats junior was the half in case you are puzzled - he only snores half as loud as his old man). Anyhow, with food and wine sufficient for more people than were present, no-one was about to starve or die of thirst!

After a visit to the Outgate for a mixture of Hartleys and live Jazz on Friday night, Saturday dawned distinctly damp and, after festering in the hut for a while, parties set out in search of good weather, good shopping, or good beer. A delegation from the Committee including the Treasurer and Vice Chairman headed for the "Scafell" to finalize the annual dinner arrangements (that was their excuse anyway). They failed, however, as the Borrowdale road was flooded.

Meanwhile, the Duck, Blair and John Bailey decided to have a 'little stroll' over Lingmoor to the "Brit". They failed also - not due to foul weather but due to Duck's navigation which lead them round in a circular tour of the summit leaving no time to make last orders in Elterwater (must have been taking lessons from J.J!). All was not lost, however, as the Shires was open all day, resulting in one drunken Duck preparing the feast with a little help from his friends.

Such was the quantity of food and drink that even the aforementioned Tats couldn't cope with much beer at the Shires later that evening!

Sunday dawned bright and sunny, if a little late, and an excellent day out was completed by another tuck-in from the leftovers by seven of the party. Nice to see Gerry Senior at the hut again.

Don Nichol

In case you are wondering what the food was like, and how the delegation from the Committee distinguished themselves in their endeavours to swim to the Scafell Hotel, here are excerpts from the chief diplomat's account.

"Boozing And Shopping The Hard Way"

The finger post at the base of Shepherd's pointed folornly into a sear-scape of glowering mist and cloud from which three-foot waves crashed on to the road. The route was finally lost beneath a mile-wide river beyond the Jaws of Borrowdale. The Mission wimped back to Keswick for a would-be lunch at the George where, to foreign visitor's astonishment, food was declared 'off' during lunch-time. Truly British. Anyway, it made a change from shopping and boozing in Ambleside whenever we stay at Newhouses.

Meanwhile, the cook was raising an appetite in the Three Shires and directing his kitchen hands in an unusually uninhibited fashion to regale a dozen appreciative diners with his:

- i) Home Made Soup - which resembled the results of over-indulgence but in fact was delicious.
- ii) Cumberland Sausage with Baked Potatoes and own-grown beans.
- iii) Apple Pie and Custard.
- iv) Red, White & Yellow Wines

Luckily, Sunday dawned bright and clear so the effects could be worked off on the Slate and the Fells. Well done Donald!!

John Parker

TREMADOG

October

The weather was very kind, the sun shining warmly on both days. Most of the activity was very properly seen on the cliffs behind the Hut where classic routes of every grade were climbed. Fell-walkers spread much further as sections of the Rhinogs, Moelwyns and even the Carneddau felt the impact of FMC boots.

One team returning to the hut on Saturday saw the flash as the electricity supply to the eastern half of the Parish failed. No power for cooking meant a trip into Porthmadog for fish suppers before the evening

chin-wag and glass emptying in The Goat by the Tolleys, Tattersalls, Martin Dale, Paul Hensey, Andrew Smith, Don Nichol, Frank Towne, Dave Wood, Mike Penn, Dave Earle, Dave Laddiemann and Jan, Phil Morris, Christine Barbier, Andy Dunhill and the scribe.

John Parker

A BIT OF A DO

(LOCAL 40th)

October

A fortieth anniversary is not something that happens every day. In fact, it only happens once every fourteen thousand, five hundred and ninety days (or thereabouts). So, it is certainly worth celebrating in style and, on October 3rd, that is exactly what the FMC did.

The management of our newly adopted social venue, The Poulton Conservative Club, went out of their way to make us welcome, providing the buffet and a bar extension. Apparently, the local Magistrate is a bit particular when it comes to granting extensions so Ken, the chairman of the Con. club decided to bill us as the "Conservative Ramblers Association". The extension was duly granted, but Ken thought he might have some explaining to do when the event was publicized as the FMC's on Radio Lancashire, Red Rose Radio and in a full page feature in the West Lancashire Gazette.

As the doors opened the numbers quickly swelled with many members and ex-members travelling from all over the North West. A rough head count revealed a hundred and twenty odd people (should that be a hundred and twenty-odd people?).

The anniversary journal arrived fresh from the printers. A magnificent opus representing a phenomenal effort by the Editor, Dave Earle. Dave was reported as saying that he hoped the sales would exceed those of the Malta guide book, but there was no offer to eat his hat if this did not happen (once bitten.....).

A Gazette reporter and photographer arrived for another feature as Jack Jowett's anecdotal club history enthralled the audience.

The management of the Con. Club were well impressed. Bar takings for October were factors of ten higher than in previous years. They thought it would be a good idea to make it an annual event.

The night finished with one last photo call, this time for the cutting of the anniversary cake, skilfully baked and decorated in the design of the club badge. Many thanks to Geoff's Mum, Bett Forest.

The success of this type of evening always hinges on the atmosphere created by those present. With the FMC membership we couldn't fail.

Mark Harding

T'ROACHES CAR MEET

October

It was a dull and chilly Sunday morning when we rolled up outside the Hon. Treasurer's house. An unhealthy Dave Cundy's head popped round the door frame, his body partly clothed by a hastily donned dressing gown of ghostly white towel material. He had obviously been indulging heavily the night before and was in no fit state to indulge in some cragging at such an obscene time of day. We left him to take his tablets or return to his inflatable. He did say he would join us late - along with Mr Wood. We weren't optimistic due to the state of him. It brought back memories of the countless times people had called round for me on Sunday mornings and I had greeted them in similar or worse condition. Perhaps the most frequent person this has happened to is Paul Reid. He glanced wryly in my direction as I reminded him.

We sped south down the Motorway with little to get optimistic about. Grey skies, wind, odd spots of rain. Doom! I felt sorry for Garry in the back as the continuous wave of botty burps circulated round the car. He was hoping to get something done! We were just out for the ride! Things didn't improve much as we entered Macc. I had now resigned myself to the fact that the attendance on my meet would, in the least, be poor. I spotted a pub I'd been in once with another possible meet attendant, Glen Brooks, who lives nearby. "THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW" - what a great name. Perhaps a brew would go down well at the Magician's? But then I thought, he will probably still be in bed. Some magic was definitely in order to change the weather. The trees were swaying a bit too much for our liking.

We rolled up just as several hundred University minibuses emptied their FRESHERS! At least the crag wouldn't be quiet. The attire of one or two of them led us into a false sense of security. The lad wearing the shorts was definitely out to impress as was the berk in the

T-SHIRT and LYCRA. They were obviously the rigger-player and the "I'm good on the climbing wall so I should be good on the crag" boys. We opted for FULL KIT and sheepishly got out of the car for 'a look'.

The cliff was as green as a Leprechaun's hat and as busy as Blackpool Prom on a lights weekend. We went up to the Upper Tier to hide amongst the boulders. We pulled on our boots in the lee of one of the biggest ones. The wind was penetrating! A couple of early starters were retreating from high on Saul's Crack to flasks and duvets. It was not a day for tough leads - more one of quick bursts of activity and then back to shelter. I wandered around picking off old chestnuts until I came to that arete we all knew. The wind picked up and the rock was greasy and it deposited me back in the MUD. Paul and Garry battled with a rattly crack, the Fresher population began to swarm, Rigger Boy still in shorts. Mr. & Mrs. ABSEILER had arrived with their children, RAP and PEL and were trying to wedge a helmet in the roof of SLOTH whilst fishing for that perfect descent.

An old friend from Paul Clarke's Newcastle days turned up and joined me for steaming Tomato Soup. John Perry had gone grey since those wild days up by the TYNE. He showed me some of his chestnuts which all seemed a bit out of reach up the tree of difficulty, however, with a little more soup I managed that arete using a set of holds I didn't even know existed. 6c it may have been, but I can't manage them!

Phil Caley and Hal Heaney had arrived and were weaving an intricate path through student WEBS. Glenn Brooks and Lou turned up just in time to see the local MONKEY hung from his feet from a high perch and peel a banana for the crowds. A bleary eyed Mr. Cundy and companion Mr. Wood were next on the scene. My meet was getting crowded! The Pub was mentioned but then we realised it was 3pm, and besides, the two Daves were still plenty topped up. I followed the monkey as far as I dared and the Daves sloped off to the Lower Tier to practice on the wrong end of the string.

Down below, the MOON had come out and was shining brightly amongst throngs of lesser stars. Roving reporter Woods gasped at his every move and marvelled at the ground over which he had passed. He tried to get the Moon's views on ORBITAL SPACE TELESCOPES but all he got was "that's E4 now" as his hero glided by. Somewhat overawed by all that was going on, Mr Cundy was having trouble with the angle that sticky rubber would stick to grit. Our arrival from the Upper Tier provoked much barracking and fortunately the MOON disappeared behind a cloud just long

enough for him to make his ascent of CHALK STORM. Knowing Woodsie's dislike of the sloping hold and rasping roughness of the crack, it was no surprise that he'd still got his trainers on. He provided himself as the perfect anchor man though. We top-roped CHALK STORM, PIECE OF MIND and another thing to its right with an ASTRONOMICAL grade. These were routes which required brain removal before attempting them solo - after practise or not! And I for one will not be removing mine in a hurry. I slipped off into the boulders again to play on untouched aretes whilst the MOON returned for his finale before a packed crowd. One of his entourage was heard to say; "If Moon discovered bottle we might as well take up knitting". We puked up and wandered down to look at Doug's boulder already sporting wire brush marks. We left for BOLLINGTON and the BROOK'S household for the three C's - CATS, COFFEE and CAKE.

More Boddington's later and a Chinese and the day was over. Mr Wood raced over as we were setting off; "Stopping for more beer?" he enquired. There's no stopping him at present - this year's LUSH!

A great day was HADBYALL, snatched from the jaws of despair.

Martin Dale

CHESTER HUT, LLANBERIS

November

All the Welsh meets recently have been well attended and this was no exception. Early November can often provide cold but settled weather, and this meet was blessed with a fair amount of sunshine which suited walkers admirably, but the cold conditions forced the hard climbers to modify their ambitions somewhat.

People travelled from as far away as Ulverston and Salisbury to be on this meet and they were not disappointed by conditions. Saturday provided cloud on the very top of Snowdon which put down a bit of snow, but otherwise, conditions were clear and bright. Bob Travis was first away, Snowdon-wards, followed by Donald who set off to LLANBERIS! to do some shopping. The rest of the walkers took in Snowdon by a circuitous ridge route which sets off from the front door of the hut and finishes 7 hours later at the back door. Climbing ambitions had to be modified but many classic middle grade routes, in which the area abounds, were ascended.

Saturday night found us in the new climbers bar at Llanberis which seems to operate under the auspices of the BMC. You have to be a member to get in at any rate. It made a very pleasant change from the wild west atmosphere of the Padarn and it is hoped that it proves successful; but not too successful. Mr Travis proved that he had not consumed enough beer when he failed to fall off the road on the way back up the 1 in 3 hill after a night on the bevy. Staying at the Chester Hut always proves character building.

Sunday dawned cold and sunny. The walkers made their way to either Cwm Silin or the Glyders where both groups had a truly splendid day amid the finest scenery that Wales can provide. The climbers assembled 'on the slate' in the massive quarry opposite the hut and spent the day climbing routes of unspeakable difficulty.

All in all, an excellent weekend fully enjoyed by the many club members present.

Dave Earle

CLUB DINNER, SCAPELL HOTEL

December

After three years or so, the management of the O.D.G. Hotel decided that there were too many of us and that we were just too clumsy so, we found ourselves looking for another venue. No easy task for a club like ours. Fortunately, the Scafell Hotel in Borrowdale came up trumps. We had a couple of successful Dinner Meets there a few years ago and were disappointed when we had to move on after the hotel owner decided to close during winter.

Things were different this time, since Miles was keeping the hotel open throughout December so we quickly grabbed the last remaining date for that month. A pre-dinner pow-wow with the manageress brought a request from the owner himself for a Jack Jowett pantomime. With only a couple of weeks to go this came as a bit of a bombshell, but Jack was rapidly wheeled out of retirement on the excuse of it being the Club's 40th year. He rapidly came up with the goods, assisted by Duck and myself. A cast was hastily assembled and a couple of shambolic but hilarious rehearsals round Jack's piano produced a tape to save having to learn lines. The star of the show, Major John Hickman, suffered a large bout of stage fright, followed later by the loss of his trousers and his place was taken at the eleventh hour by Mark Harding.

The club secretary in his usual inimitable style selected from a large and varied menu, which was to cause some consternation amongst veggie guests but eventual relief came with the alternative main course.

Saturday was superb, and found members in various parts of the lakes above a temperature inversion which gave everyone a fabulous day on the hill. Soon, however, it was time to make one's way to the Hotel to swap yarns with contemporaries and to renew acquaintances with long lost members recently returned or who live too far away to attend meets regularly. Such is the quality of FMC membership that the Dinner Meet could have gone on for several days to do justice to all those present.

The hotel was warm and friendly, and the staff and service excellent. The meal itself was superb and briskly served (a pleasant change from the O.D.G.). The layout of the room was informal which probably helped speed up the doling out of the goodies.

Once the meal was over, all those who were unable to attend the dinner proper, due to pressure of numbers, but who had, nevertheless, tuned up for the occasion, joined us for the speeches. Martin was his usual amusing and informal self and presented awards to Mike Penn and I for our services to drinking up time at the Swinside Inn (problem resolved by arrival of new landlord).

Steve Halton presented Rebecca with a driving manual (but next day stuffed his own car into a very solid wall) and, as record holder of the Mug Of The Year Trophy, presented it to Gerry Evans for his services to inter-club relations and vehicle re-design.

After the meal had been cleared away the fun commenced, starting with J.J. Productions. I have never seen one myself as I have always been in them, but they're certainly fun for the performers. Alan Bell got things underway with one of Jack's ditties, followed by "Three Little Maids From School" looking a bit like Mike Penn, Duck and myself. These were followed by a press-ganged Mark Harding as the 'Major' and then sundry monks of 'high renown'. Finally, the whole thing collapsed in to "The Himalayan Yeti Stomp".

The disco that followed was enjoyable, if a bit tame, but there was plenty of time out for conversation. It was nice to see Deborah still maintaining her contact with the club, fresh from winning a silver medal

for fencing at the World Games in Holland. The fabled Rupert re-appeared with Dave Archer, and Alan Bell remarked later that it was nice to see a bit of class!? back at the dinner.

Apologies to all those for whom there was no room at the inn.

Dave Earle.

You wouldn't believe how much trouble I've had in trying to find someone who remembers enough to write about Saturday night. Well done Dave!

In addition to the excellent company on the night, one of the most memorable events for me was witnessing Stuart Gascoigne, equipped with two axes and a pair of training shoes, leading the main ice pitch of South-East Gully on the Saturday. Who knows what he might get up to if we all chip in and buy him a pair of crampons!

Ed.

LETTER FROM DOWN UNDER

BRISBANE
August 1990

Dear Mrs. Dale,

Please do the world a service and throw your son out on to the street now!

Dear Martin,

An upside down antipodean WHOOP!

Can you guess how good it is to hear 'Yooo Whoop!' on a cold Sydney evening when you're broke, staying in the red light district and 100% p**sed off?

Mr. Path actually seemed pretty bloody pleased to see us, as we forced a pint or two down our gullets. Jane (Seano's 'young lady' - shock horror) had not met any of his UK entourage before and had not been exposed to "Nob" or "Psycho". This provoked an "Er, I was going to explain this one day", from the wild man.

Gill and I are now in Brisbane and Seano's just sent Gill his old Whillan's to borrow PLUS a March '90 newsletter (10/10 Steve!) - hence I had the idea to save soddin' expensive postcards and send a 'Newsflash'. (he's since sent himself - Ed.)

I suppose that as this is a climbing newsletter (?) - I'd better write about rock. Well, Brisbane has a crag in the middle of the city - floodlit 'till midnight. Sensible chaps these Aussies. People top-rope here and it's not half bad. I scrounged a few 'ropes' off non-cool types and then met some proper climbers - 10,000% improvement. We spent an hour in the car talking about this guy's New Year in 'The Vaynol'. Apparently there is nowt like, or even vaguely like, Pete's Eats down here.

Since then we've been out to Frog Buttress a couple of times and had really good days doing 'esoteric' routes. Already I can feel my 'head' returning so we'll soon be pushing out some quality climbing. Grading is taking some adjustment - one number only: i.e. a '23' (should I ever approach such dizzy standards!) could be E3-5c, or E1-6b, or E4-4c HELP!

Our temporary residence in Brisbane is for two purposes: 1) earn some dosh; 2) rest after Asia. Also, it's turned out that we miss the worst of the Aussie winter by being in sunny Queensland. We've been doing rotten jobs to refill the desperately empty coffers. At present we're heaving booze around in a whorehouse which should set us up to avoid work 'till we're back home.

We've bought a wonderful car to accompany us on our cragging tour of Australia. It's not a small, economical car - it's actually ENORMOUS by UK standards, but over here it's 'only' 6 cylinder and 'only' 3.2 litres. For those of you who don't know, it's a 1973 Holden Belmont (brick shithouse model). It's exactly what's needed for Aussie roads and driving techniques. When we told Seano about the model of car, he said we'd be real 'Hoons' now. What that is I don't know, but I assume it's not complementary. So far, we've had it stolen once (and recovered) and knocked off the road by a Nazi truck. What else will happen I don't know, but I hope that's the worst over.

That's about all. I guess we'll send you some tasteless cards as we come across them in 'Cosmic County', 'Mt Arapiles', 'Frenchman's Cap', 'Ponill', 'Waikiki', 'Joshua Tree', 'Boulder Canyon', etc.

Then we'll be home and, I think, quite welcome it. This itinerant lifestyle might just not be for me - and it's taken quite a while to realise what a good place home is. Sob. Sob!

See you all in January,

Simon & Gill

Other prospective overseas contributors please note that we hope to be more punctual in publishing the newsletter in future! - Ed.

LORD EDWARD'S MAGIC

Prologue:

Some year's ago as we came back from a Whit week on Harris we stopped, by invitation, at Cluanie Lodge which was the place for the club's annual Scottish week. The club had just arrived as we were heading south. As we had never been to Cluanie before, Eddie Craig took his ballon glass, filled it up and gave us a tour of the stately pile. The lounge with its wind-up gramophone and chaise-longue, the dining room with its large polished table, the drawing room, and upstairs to the spacious bedrooms and, finally, the bathrooms with their stately Victorian plumbing. Eddie's manner earned him the name 'Lord Edward' from our family. We had a good night in convivial company, then departed (in the rain) the next day. We could never join the Cluanie meets being restricted as to when holidays can be taken.

The Story:

One night Lord Edward rang up. As we exchanged greetings I pencilled him in for next week in Wales..... but no, he was not booking in, he was enquiring if we wanted to go to Cluanie in July, the first week of the school holidays. He promised us six days of perfect weather with one, the Wednesday, of resting, watching the rain sheeting across the loch while we would be inside by the log fire with the Malt. Who could resist his silver, honeyed tongue - well, most people could - unbelievers who thought that Scotland in July was always wet, plagued with midges and teachers.

At last the holidays came, and in the early hours of Saturday June and I set off. A second breakfast at Callander saw the sun beginning to warm the high street. Refreshed, we set off again, stopping on the way for a walk up Little Buc-something or other. Going north from Fort

William, the early evening light glinting off the lochs was spectacular, and gave a welcoming glow to the hills. At Cluanie, we were getting established when Peter and Gillian Llewellyn arrived - that was the team; four, plus Eddie. A select group. Eddie had phoned to say that he would be a day late. We knew why, as a naughty lady from his place of work had told us that he was to celebrate a special birthday - his!

Sunday saw some cloud on the hills so we decided on Carn Ghluasaid where a stalkers path gave an easy ascent to the plateau. The cloud rose with us and we were rewarded with magnificent views of corries close at hand, and far-distant hills, all clear and sharp. On our next hill, Sgurr nan Coubhairean, we rested in the sun and looked at the rest of our route. Peter assumed a teutonic stance and pointed us at a lump of a hill to which we could walk to and return (Tigh Mor na Selige). It was a Munro! On we went over glorious hills to what turned out to be the highlight at the end - the ridge to Mullach Fraoch-choire. The slanting light and colour of the rock impressed us. Back at the lodge, 'Lord Edward' had arrived, complete with balloons (40) and birthday cake!

On Monday, Eddie said that he had something to do in Glen Nevis and left! We headed for Loch Quoich and Sgurr a Mhaoraich. The views to Skye, Knoydart and Loch Hourm were breathtaking.

Tuesday saw a freshly washed Eddie heading for Glen Nevis while we took to the South Cluanie Ridge. What can one say about such a walk when the skies are clear, the air calm, and the sun shining. Maybe it has extra charm because of the number of times we've seen it swept with wind and rain. This is a real gem of a walk.

So the week went on. Hills upon hills. Apart from South Cluanie, we saw few people and, best of all, no midges except for some around the Cluanie Inn and the lodge in the evening. Q. - Why do BT's new telephone boxes stop 6" from the ground and have a light? A, - to make life easy for midges.

Saturday came with low cloud as we packed up and headed north for Stac Pollaidh and on to Handa while the rest went south. The weather, locality and company, made it a holiday to remember.

John Wiseman

ON AND OFF THE PISTE

That arch organiser of ski holidays, Gordon Heywood, has been leading groups of Fylde Mountaineers, ex-members and friends to the slopes for many years.

1990 was no exception and late January found us in Grindlewald. There was no snow to speak of but the weather was very cold and clear. Our full lift passes gave us trips on the cog railways as far as Interlaken, as well as the usual ski lifts.

Two or three days were spent skiing what was available, interspersed with walks up to the tops of the nearby hills and visits to the local glaciers. The highlight of the holiday was the trip up to the Jungfrauoch. The weather and scenery were superb. Several of us wanted to ski the Aletch glacier but the guides demanded a toll of £50, so we compromised and paid £2 each to be tied to an enormously long rope and marched across the head of the glacier to the Monch hut. It was difficult to decide whether it was hysterically funny or humiliating. The surrounding magnificent scenery made it all worthwhile though.

Another walk enjoyed by members was the downhill hike from Kline Scheidegg to Wengen. Two members also followed the ridge from First to Scheideggaplatting, overlooking Interlaken - a classic hike giving superb views of the Oberland giants, Finstaerhorn, Wetterhorn, Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau. James Bond's revolving restaurant was also included in the itinerary which gave us the chance to see the stupendous Lauterbrunnen Valley.

After Easter another team found themselves in Zermatt. Skiing conditions and the weather were superb, although ski-mountaineering was somewhat hampered by the huge recent snowfall which needed several days to consolidate.

The Breithorn was eventually ascended and the Stockhorn visited. Other available trips included the Gorner Glacier and the Findeln Glacier, still the steepest thing I have skied down. One party was cutting steps below us.

All in all, a superb week was enjoyed by everyone, walkers and skiers alike, although proceedings were somewhat livened up one evening when a helicopter crashed into the next apartment, fortunately without fatal result.

Many thanks to Gordon for his organisation over the last few years and for many superb holidays.

Dave Earle.

THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE VIEW
(an evening's mountain biking!)

What's all this? - not jobs with off-road bikes in the FMC? - Oh dear, oh dear, the world's falling apart - Folk'll be buying paragliders next. I'm sure that's what a few old fuddy-duddies out there are thinking. But let's move with the times.

Did someone mention erosion? Do me a favour! Ninety nine percent of erosion on the hill is caused by coaches full of ramblers who walk over the fells in droves, year in year out. Take the path up Pike o' Bliscoe, for example. I've certainly not seen a fat tyre machine being cranked up there. Have you? So what's caused all the erosion then?

So what's this shocking incident all about then? Well, it goes like this:

A weekend fell race in Shropshire didn't materialize and it was too late to join Duck's nosh-up. Therefore, a weekend on two wheels was needed to save me from becoming a 'Couch Potato'. Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning were spent burning up the miles in the Fylde, but Sunday lunchtime brought a phone call from Dave "rescuer of schoolgirls" Harrison.

"Let's go mountain biking"; he uttered, not aware of the wrath that might descend!

With bikes strapped to the back of the car we headed to Tarnbrook, that metropolis near Dolphinholme. Soon we were OFF! Fat tyres and low gears versus the Hill! It didn't take us long to get up the track on the Fellside where we met a couple of ramblers who exchanged pleasantries with us as they stepped aside, allowing bikes and riders to flash 'by.

Not long after, the path steepened and the loose surface resulted in loss of traction. No problem I thought, I'll just walk this bit. I should have known better - a rambler came around the bend: "I thought you were supposed to ride those things" - an original remark if ever I heard one.

By this stage we were level with Thorn Crag, and after crossing the stream we were on Mallowdale Fell - a peaty place used by nesting seagulls - or so I'm told. Anyway, none were in residence. Time for a break! They don't make chains like they used to, do they? One slice of fruit cake and use of a rivet extractor later, we were off for the best bit of riding of the day, pedalling along the wall to Wardstones through mud, glorious mud! Oh what fun!

Then there was the view. Well, ya really had to be there. You name it, and we could see it. Snowdonia, Isle of Man, The Lakes, Arnside, Grange, Kirby Lonsdale, Howgills, Whernside, Ingleborough, Tosside and Pendle Hill: a 360° panorama of northern England all lit with that fantastic evening sunlight! Fab, the Bizz, Mega, Sound, Ace - not many words to describe it (not those anyway). All I can say is pick a nice evening and go and look for it yourself.

With darkness imminent, we headed across country to pick up a gravel track which took us down at high speed all the way in to the valley at Lee, so fast, in fact, we could hardly read the 'PRIVATE' signs by the track. But if the gentry will build tracks on the hill so that they can drive 4*4 jeeps up them for a day's shooting, mad bikers will whizz down them. Fair's fair. And after all, who says Lord-loads-a-dosh-rich-git can own all the countryside?

We arrived back at the car as darkness fell, and soon we were off for a pint at the 'Moor Cock' on Oakenclough Fell to reflect on a wonderful evening on the hill. And no-one was harassed by reckless jobs either. In fact, most mountain bikers are good law abiding folk like me!

Henry 'shot putter' Iddon

During the summer of 1991 I hope to return to the Alps for three weeks. I am considering two areas which provide easily accessible acclimatisation peaks as well as 'grandes courses'.

Apart from arranging self-drive cross-channel transport & selecting camp-sites as bases or rendezvous points, organisation could be as minimal as on normal meets. It is hoped to cater for the needs of the novice and old-timer as well as the super-fit who wish to broaden their experience in mountaineering.

Anyone interested? Let me know whether you have a preference for the French or Swiss/German Alps. Two valley bases would be used for a campaign beginning in the Vanoise/Tarentaise and culminating in the Ecrins or Graians whereas it is possible to use a single camp site at the head of the Rhone valley serving the Lepontine and Central ranges before tackling a range of 4,000m peaks in the Bernese or Pennine Alps. This will not be a rock-climbing holiday - the limestone of southern France & Spain gives reliable conditions on better rock and the USA teams of 1989/90 may be turning their sights to these areas, and indeed, disastrous conditions in the high mountains might force a retreat thence.

I would propose we decide on say a month-long period during which parties can travel from the Fylde for as many weeks or days as they like to our base in the Alps where companions/guidance will be available.

If interested, contact the Secretary,

John Parker.

THE FYLDE M.C. 40th ANNIVERSARY CLUB JOURNAL

This handsomely bound and impressive tome, formulated, designed and edited by Dave Earle against all odds, is now on sale.

It contains over 100 A4 pages (12 of them photographs) packed full of interesting, lively, informative and amusing anecdotal articles which trace the history of the club from its formative years to the present day.

Everyone who's read a copy is giving it rave reviews and, at £3 per copy is reckoned by all to be good value.

Those unable to obtain a copy by hand, can write to John Wiseman, 24, Tarn Rd., Thornton Cleveleys enclosing £4 in order to cover post and packaging.

If anyone is in contact with ex-members or others who may be interested, please pass the word on.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 13th February, 7.30pm
River Wyre Hotel

ROCK CLIMBING IN THE USA

Wednesday, 6th March, 8.30pm
Conservative Club, Poulton

Following the success and popularity of the recent European climbing audio-visual, the March social features Manchester based climber, Nick Bond with his USA presentation. Rock climbing in Colorado, the Utah desert and the amazing Devil's Tower in Wyoming.

MEMBERS SLIDES II - THE SEQUEL

Wednesday, 10th April, 8.30pm
Conservative Club, Poulton

FOR SALE

CLIMBER & RAMBLER Sept '74 - July '84
119 issues for £10

GREAT OUTDOORS Mar '78 (no.1) - Jan '84
71 issues for £5

Contact Dave Bibby, 19, Kinnerton Place, Anchorsholme, Blackpool
Tel 0253 - 824137

THE MOUNTAIN LOVER

Wednesday, 20th February, 7.??pm
Turnpike Centre, Leigh.
(0942-44991)

£2.50

For those who missed Dennis Gray's lecture at the ICI social club, here it is again.

MOUNTAIN BIKE MADNESS IN THE BOULDER DESERT

Thursday, 7th March, 7.??pm

Turnpike Centre, Leigh.

£2.50

A lecture by Richard Crane on his bike expedition to reach the most remote point in the world from the open sea.

The Committee received two complementary tickets to this show. One was lost! The first to ask John Tattersall in person can have the remaining ticket.

ITALIAN ROCK

Friday, 22nd March, 7.??pm

Turnpike Centre, Leigh.

£2.50

An audio-visual lecture by Al Churcher on rock climbing, geography, culture and wines.

CLUB LIBRARY

It may be news to some members (including me) that the Club has an extensive library, currently in the custody of Dave Earle. If you want to borrow any of the books and get on first name terms with the authors, just ask Dave.

Here's a list:

| <u>TITLE</u> | <u>AUTHOR</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| KANCHENJUNGA CHALLENGE | BAUER |
| MOUNTAINEERING VENTURES | BENSON |
| ANNAPURNA SOUTH FACE | BONNINGTON |
| EVEREST THE HARD WAY | BONNINGTON |
| TEN GREAT MOUNTAINS | BUSK |
| THE PUMAS CLAW | CLARK |
| LANCS PLAIN & SEABOARD | COLLINS |
| FAMOUS CAVERNS & GROTTOES | DAVENPORT ADAMS |
| PORTRAITS OF ISLANDS | DOBSON |
| SWISS LIFE | ELEK |
| ON SKI IN CAIRNGORMS | FISOFF |
| MAKALU | FRANCIS |
| FIRST ON ROPE (NOVEL) | FRISON-ROCHE |
| THE WHITE DESERT | GIAEVE |

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| CAIRNGORMS | GORDON |
| CENTRAL HIGHLANDS, HIGHWAYS & BYWAYS | GORDON |
| BRENVA | GRAHAM BROWN |
| ARRAN | GUIDE |
| ARROCHER | GUIDE |
| BEN NEVIS | GUIDE |
| BERNER ALPE (GERMAN) | GUIDE |
| CAIRNGORM ROCK CLIMBS | GUIDE |
| CENTRAL HIGHLANDS (SMC) | GUIDE |
| CLEVELAND | GUIDE |
| GLENCOE | GUIDE |
| GUIDE VALLOT MT. BLANC & VAILAIS (FRENCH) | GUIDE |
| IDWAL | GUIDE |
| ISLE OF SKYE (SMC) | GUIDE |
| KINDER | GUIDE |
| LADDOW | GUIDE |
| SCAFELL | GUIDE |
| SELECTED CLIMBS MT BLANC | GUIDE |
| SELECTED CLIMBS PENNINE ALPS | GUIDE |
| SHEFFIELD AREA | GUIDE |
| SKYE | GUIDE |
| SNOWDON SOUTH | GUIDE |
| THE CAIRNGORMS (SMC) | GUIDE |
| TRYFAN | GUIDE |
| ZERMATT & DISTRICT | GUIDE |
| ZERMATT & VALAIS | GUIDE |
| SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET | HARRER |
| EIGER DIRECT | HASTON |
| ANNAPURNA | HERZOG |
| SHORT WALK IN THE HINDU KUSH | HERZOG |
| K2 | HOUSTON |
| ASCENT OF EVEREST | HUNT |
| MORE THAN MOUNTAINS | JACKSON |
| TENTS IN THE CLOUDS | JACKSON |
| ALPINE PILGRIMAGE | K??BY |
| LETS GO CLIMBING | KIRKUS |
| RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MOUNTAINEER | LARDEN |
| MOUNTAINEERING | MANNING |
| MODERN SNOW & ICE TECHNIQUES | MARCH |
| APPROACH TO THE HILLS | MEADE |
| MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY | MILNEW |
| YORKSHIRE CAVES | MITCHELL |
| SPACE BELOW MY FEET | MOFFAT |

| | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| THE ALPS IN 1864 | MOORE |
| MY CLIMBS IN THE ALPS & CAUCASUS | MUMERY |
| SCOTTISH HIMALAYA EXPEDITION | MURRAY |
| STORY OF EVEREST | MURRAY |
| SOUTH COL | NOYCE |
| MOUNTAINEERING | PEACOCK |
| SCOTTISH PEAKS | POUCHER |
| HIGHLAND CLEARANCES | PREBBLE |
| EVEREST 1933 | RUTTLEDGE |
| FOUR AGAINST EVEREST | SAYER |
| MOUNTAINS OF TARTARY | SHIPTON |
| UPON THAT MOUNTAIN | SHIPTON |
| SKI TECHNIQUES | SIERRA |
| ALPINE WAYS | SMYTHE |
| THE MOUNTAIN SCENE | SMYTHE |
| VALLEY OF FLOWERS | SMYTHE |
| AFTER EVEREST | SOMERVILLE |
| MOUNTAINEERING | SPENCER |
| MEMOIRS OF A MOUNTAINEER | SPENCER CHAPMAN |
| PLAYGROUND OF EUROPE | STEPHEN |
| CONQUISTADORES OF THE USELESS | TERRAY |
| WESTERN ISLES | THE COUNTY BOOKS |
| ASCENT OF NANDA DEVI | TILMAN |
| SNOW ON THE EQUATOR | TILMAN |
| GLACIERS OF THE ALPS IN 1861 | TYNDALL |
| MAN OF EVEREST | ULLMAN? |
| MOUNTAIN WORLD | VARIOUS EDITIONS |
| AVALANCHE | WECHSBERG |
| CAMPS & CLIMBS IN ARCTIC NORWAY | WIER |
| EAST OF KATMANDU | WIER |
| MOUNTAINDRAFT | WYNTHROP YOUNG |
| MOUNTAINS WITH A DIFFERENCE | WYNTHROP YOUNG |
| ON HIGH HILLS | WYNTHROP YOUNG |
| EPIC OF EVEREST | YOUNGHUSBAND |

Updates of the list, complete with spelling corrections can be obtained from Dave Earl on request.

If any member wishes to add to the library on a permanent or temporary basis, please contact Dave.