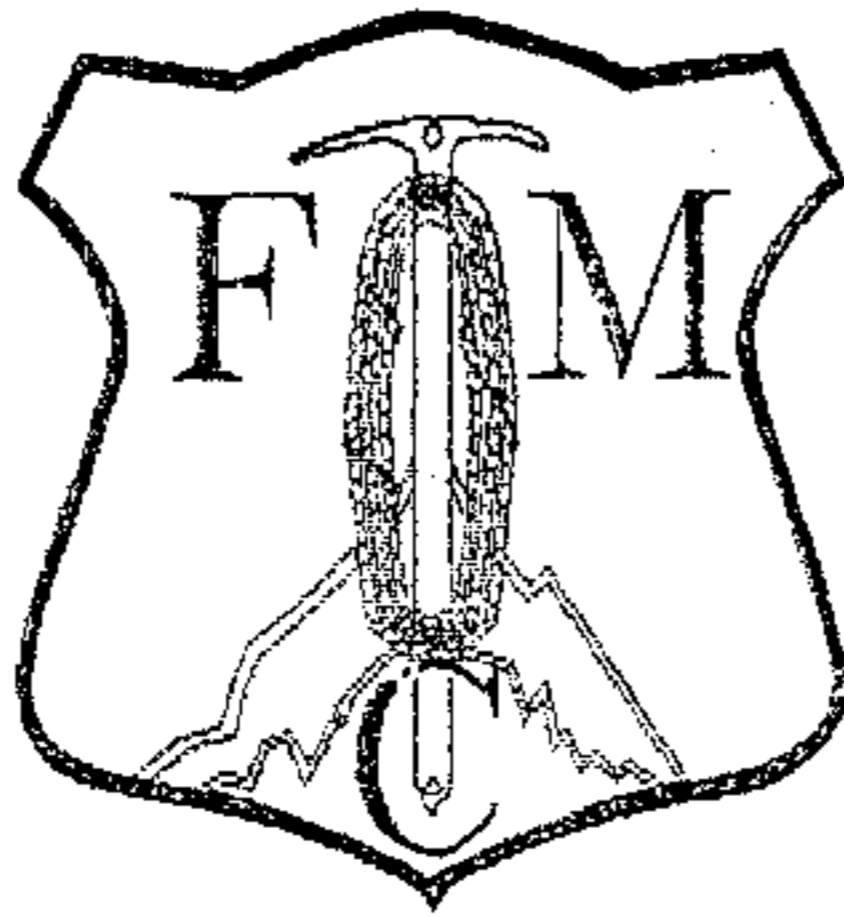


*FYLDE  
MOUNTAINEERING  
CLUB*



*NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER  
1992*

This year, the Club has suffered the tragic and untimely loss of Marie Horsley after a long illness. The Club extends it's heartfelt sympathies to her husband, Peter and their family.

The Editor apologizes to all members for the late appearance of this newsletter. A combination of lack of suitable material, pressure at work and many weekends climbing have conspired to make this edition almost an annual one! If anyone feels strongly enough about it, I suggest they put their names forward for the role of Editor at the next AGM. ○

I also suggest that meet leaders actually submit something for publication. Preferably timely, well researched and concise with no lack of humour. This could save the newsletter from appearing to be primarily made up of contributions from only a very small group of "old lags" and would provide a more balanced finished product. It would also make it more interesting to read - let alone produce!

Last month's copy of High contained an article on climbing a new TD route on the Aig. Argentiere, Chamonix, by Roy Ruddle - a recent ex-member of the club. Either we weren't good enough for him or he's forgotten to pay his subs! The route is called something like "Hermann Hob-Nob meets Dorothy Dinosaur"

Congratulations to Steve Wrigley on completing the Bob Graham Round in 22½ hours. Commiserations to Viv Broughton who was forced to retire because of an injured foot with only 8 peaks remaining.

And now to business.....

CLUB DETAILS

Introductory Members

The Club extends a warm welcome to:

Ian Wiseman 24, Tam Road, Thornton-Cleveleys.  
Tel. 0253-826594

David Carlisle 35A, Breck Rd. Poulton

Gary Seddington The Kings Arms, 105 Lord St. Fleetwood.  
Tel. 874837

Stephen Wrigley 14 Bagot St., Blackpool. FY1 6EZ Tel. 47597

John Moule 49, Highfield Rd., Churchtown, Southport  
Merseyside PR9 8QL Tel. 0704-26297

Graham Collier 52, Farnham Way, Carlton Green, Poulton FY6 7TG

Craig Higgins 6, Lockerbie Ave., Thornton Cleveleys FY5 3EN  
Tel. 865509

Richard Stevenson 10, Willow Drive, Wrea Green PR4 2NJ  
Tel. 0772-683607

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 10.00pm on Wednesday nights (occasional social events permitting).

Full Members

Notice is hereby given that the following, have satisfied the Club's stringent and rigorously applied criteria and are now full members:..

Chris Bell

Andrew Hird

Andy Brockbank

Anthony Hughes

David (Cosher) Bailey

Steve Swindells (rejoined) 19, Brighton Terrace Road, Crooks,  
Sheffield S10 1NT Tel. 0742-663702

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Janet Connelly and Phil Morris on their recent marriage.  
The Club wish them all the best for the future.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Paul & Irene 11, Airedale Mews, Skipton, N. Yorks.  
Taylor Home-0756-701076/ Work-0274-733444

Sean & Jane 12, Fifth St., Scarborough, NSW 2515  
Smith Australia. Home-042675125/ Work-025252811

Mike Penn & Carole Lou Beal, 11310 Saissac Languedoc, France.  
(They are doing a good line in B&B for  
individuals & groups)

Phil Caley Has changed his telephone number to ex -  
directory to discourage heavy breathers.  
0204-794926.

Nils Tremmel C/O UNESCO, P.O. Box 29, 38, Lenin St.  
Phnum Penh, Cambodia.

Bill & Anne McRae 8, Clough Meadow, Lostock, Bolton BL1 5XB  
Tel. 0204-495409

Phil Morris 10, Windsor Gardens, Garstang, Lancs.  
Tel. 0995-606632

#### CLUB CALENDAR

Something normally happens every weekend: Refer Thatched House, Poulton on Wednesdays, after 10.00pm or telephone a Committee Member.

Official Club meets are shown highlighted. Dates generally reflect nights when huts are available. Thus a date of 28-29 would normally indicate Friday & Saturday night.

Contact John Wiseman regarding hut availability for Sunday nights & weekdays and who will be the meet leaders for meets with leaders still to be arranged.

Occasional informal ladies meets are also organized by Jenny Tolley - Tel. Preston 713817.

Social Meets which have currently been arranged are shown underlined. Most socials during the winter months are held at the Conservative Club on the first Wednesday of the month, commencing at 8.30.

#### SEPTEMBER

18-19	Intro. Membs. Meet Stair	Frank Towne
25-26	Langdale	
25-26	Fallcliffe Derbyshire	Judith Swift

#### OCTOBER

2 - 3	Stair	
2 - 3	Tremadog	Mark Harding
- 7	<u>Con. Club. Social - Nick Bond Audiovisual on rock climbing in Australia or Europe</u>	
9 -10	Mountain Biking Langdale	Martin Dale
14-17	Stair	
16-17	Corris	Don Nichol
23-24	Working Weekend Langdale	
	<b>**new addition**</b>	
-25	Car Meet, Yorkshire	K Hindle 0253-883731
30-31	Glen Trool Galloway	John Parker
30-31	Stair	

#### NOVEMBER

- 4	<u>Con. Club Social - Steve Walker on back-packing in Peru</u>	
6 - 7	Fireworks & Food Stair	Claire Addy
13-14	Langdale	
20-21	Family Weekend Langdale	
20-21	Working Weekend Stair	
27-28	Langdale	
-29	Car Meet	Martin Dale

#### DECEMBER

- 2	<u>Con Club Social - Slide Competition judged by Dave Bibby.</u>	
	<u>3 categories - Scenic, Action &amp; Humour. Max 3 slides per category. All slides to have been taken in past year.</u>	
4 - 5	Caving	Pete Llewellyn 0200-25688
4 - 5	Stair	
11-12	Stair - <u>FMC ANNUAL DINNER SCAPELL HOTEL BORROWDALE</u>	
18-19	Stair & Langdale available	
24- 3	Both huts available for Festivities	

#### JANUARY

8 - 9	Langdale	
8 - 9	Caseg Fraith, Ogwen	John Wiseman
15-16	"Bean Feast" Stair	Paul & Irene Taylor
22-23	Working Weekend Langdale	Donald Nichol
29-30	Stair	
29-30	Family Weekend Langdale	

FEBRUARY

5 - 6 Langdale  
 12-13 Intro. Membs. Meet STAIR Don Nichol  
 \*\*NOT Langdale as stated in Syllabus\*\*  
 19-20 Langdale  
 19-21 Loch Earn John Parker  
 26-27 Stair  
MARCH  
 5 - 6 Bolt Clippers Langdale Martin Dale  
 12-13 Mountain Biking Stair Phil Morris  
 19-20 Langdale  
 19-20 Family Weekend Stair  
 14-18 CIC Hut £4 per night Leader to be arranged  
 \*\*new addition\*\*  
 19-20 Onich Don Nichol  
 26-27 Stair  
 26-27 Inverey (8 places) Leader to be arranged  
 \*\*new addition\*\*  
 -28 Car Meet Dave Cundy

APRIL

2 - 3 Langdale  
 2 - 3 Fallcliffe Dave Wood  
 9 -11 Wye Valley Camping Claire Addy  
 9 -11 Stair  
 16-17 Langdale  
 16-17 Black Mountains Rebecca Hargreaves  
 23-24 Intro. Membs. Meet Stair John Hickman  
 30- 1 Langdale

CLUB BUSINESS

As usual, no really earth shaking matters have arisen over the past nine months!

Working weekends have been generally well attended (when they haven't been cancelled) which has seen both huts kept in good nick. The skirtings and trimmings to the wooden panelling in the common room at Stair have not been completed as was reported in December's Newsletter. The legendary pause continues. Volunteers please. Other improvements which were being "actively pursued" in December include replacement of a rotten window frame at Langdale and the possibility of installing a dehumidifier also at Langdale. These projects are still being actively pursued!

Some success has been achieved by hanging the new gate at Stair (thanks to Roy Nesbitt). A PVC window is destined for Langdale, as well as a new gas fire and fire retardant cladding on the kitchen door and the stairwell. Six new fire retardant mattresses have been ordered for Stair, and the purchase and fitting of two Tasman Marine stainless steel units consisting of 2 burners and one grill each should alleviate the presently chronic lack of toast making facilities.

Plans are still under way for building a new Sports Centre in the Fylde. The Club succeeded in getting a climbing wall included on the plans and Martin Dale has acted as consultant in determining the layout and type of wall best suited for climbers needs. The Council need as much support as possible for their scheme to come to fruition, and encouraging letters saying how badly we need a sports complex etc. would be welcomed from anyone living within the Blackpool Borough area. The project is called the Stanley Park Sports Complex and letters should be addressed to Blackpool Borough Council at the Town Hall.

The Committee would like to remind members that they must book a place with the meet leader before going on any meet on the syllabus.

Some of our meets take place at other club's huts. We may have a certain number of beds, the other beds in the hut being let out to another club or their own members. In this case we can not over-fill our bedspaces.



Some meets in our own huts involve catering and the meet leader needs to buy provisions in advance. They can be embarrassed if a number of unbooked members arrive.

Similarly, if a member books a place but finds that their circumstances have changed so that they can't go, then they should ring the meet leader as soon as possible so that the place may be offered to someone on the reserve list or so that less food can be ordered if there are no reserves.

Gratifyingly, some meets have been booked to capacity, while, disappointingly, others have been poorly attended. If all members followed proper booking procedures, the meet leaders' job would be made that much more tolerable and less waste of bedspaces and/or food would result.

CHESTER NEWS

Hut secretary for PCU (Llanberis) is Dave Kingham through whom bookings should be made. Tel. 0829 51275.

Chester have doubled their hut fees from £1 to £2 per night as part of their funding programme for alterations to PCU and eventual replacement of Capel Curig. This is the first increase for many years but does not, of course, affect the charges we pay on hut swops as we pay our own charges to ourselves.

In May, Chester had received over £4500 in pledges for their intended building works. That leaves only about £30,000 to raise!

There was a recent break-in at PCU. Do not leave any valuables lying about.

Geoff Forrest has recently been accepted as a full member of the Chester MC and came 8th in their annual fell race from the hut to the top of Mt. Elio and back.

ALPINE MEET 1991

The FMC held the first official meet for ages in the Swiss Canton of Valais during July of last Year. As a "leader" I am pretty lax with reports about the meets I conduct or become involved with. Usually hon sec work drains me of any literary enterprise. This one was important and I did blag one or two extras to share the rigours and expense of the Alps. The trouble is the world i.e. non-mountaineers have discovered the Mountains. Crowded roads even paths are the norm if you venture onto anything that you have heard of or read about before.

The Wisepersons' involvement with things educational determined the period of our stay. July 21 & August 11 were the sailing dates. John, June & Ian were one car load that overnighted at June's Sister's in Colchester along with my co-driver and navigator, Geoff Forrest and Rebecca Hargreaves. The ship's staff were very good remembering to shut that door at the front before leaving the side to cross the wavy section of the North Sea. Without a word of a lie I used to worry about that time-saving practice of making off with that ramp thing still at the port-arms position... I supposed they knew what they were doing... After relaxing on deck Rebecca guided me then Geoff then me again unerringly the 1,000 kms or so to Ulrichen-Camping without a rest. Dave Earle was in residence abandoned by French Landowner to be, Mike Penn after their spell in the Pair o' knees.

The campsite was well chosen. It offered the right balance of price and facilities for a mountaineer's base. Showers, a versatile shop and a cheaper supermarket down the road at Munster for main supplies. Ulrichen village lies at the foot of three high road passes. We drove to the top of these several times instead of overnighting in Huts or making ridiculously early starts for Alpine objectives. A first foray proved as usual to be one of the most strenuous of the whole campaign. The EGGISHORN with its cable cars was adjudged an ideal training walk and would afford famous and spectacular views of the Bare-knees. This proved the case on a warm if magnificent day. Geoff didn't cheat at all and climbed all the way from Fiesch at 1062 metres to the summit at 2927 all in one go. My vote to storm the first 2869m mechanically was voted down with a compromise of a lift to 2214. The climb thence to the top and the tour of the opposite side above the Aletsch Glacier made a splendid start. The prolonged descent through late afternoon storms made for a long day.

Day 2 & the cars lifted us to the Furka Pass. The side of the Mutt Glacier led to a saddle. Our objective the TALLISTOCK 2875m was reached by Dave, Rebecca and myself using the rope. It rained on the descent.

The Binn valley lay West of us. We parked and poked in the mineral workings before lunching with kids & goats. I enjoyed a surprisingly mild dip at 2002m before we returned to Fald. That evening and the following day it rained. A peep into the parish church up valley had us enjoying a recital of baroque chamber music. Mozart and Vivaldi were a nice antidote for the dreich. The Wisemans' anniversary served to cheer us all though inequilibrium caused the grass to be served the main course.

Sat 27th saw our minor cavalcade in the Italian area of the Levante valley. An interesting climb through a medieval hamlet, past lakes and meadows then a highland-type summit PIZ TANEDA 2667m. A misplaced cassette caused the loss of John's first exposed slides of his holiday and a virtual reascent.

A cloudless day saw a glacier training-session turn into a full-scale assault



n the Lepontine Alps highest point, the BLINNENHORN 3378m or 11,069ft. From the Nufenen pass after preparing for glacier travel, hot sunshine made the traverse of the Gries Glacier tiring. The shaley summit was John and son Ian's first Alpine Peak. An Italian family armed with sticks couldn't dent our ego too much. The view was far-ranging and glorious and we realised they had used a shorter safer route on the Italian side.

The Grimsel Pass gave a good start for an exploration of the ridge to the West. The SIDELHORN 2764 was a touristy but worthwhile viewpoint

Tues 30th was to see an attempt on the Galenstock but mist and drizzle before dawn prompted a look at the Handegg slabs. My last day as a Civil Servant (on leave) began with RAIN and ended with another damp celebration, Geoff's cooking and the wine a consolation for what appeared to be a spell of low pressure.

Rebecca's last day was spent on the SPITZHORLI 2737.6m reached from the Simplon motorway-type Pass. Very windy (for the Alps) and cold .

On 2nd Aug everyone but the Wisemans decamped under glowering skies to sunnier pastures. As it happened the conditions became perfect everywhere and Dave, Geoff and myself needn't have emigrated to the Dolomites to find the sun! Or rushed to consume the vast number of tins Dave had brought from Poulton before we had room in the Polo to contain him. Rebecca took off in the train for a holiday from camping and tins in the Bare-knees. The tale of the Dolomites I'll leave for another time. You may have seen the slides I took during this Winter's Socials?

During the latter period of their stay the Wisemans sussed out Saas Fee, discovering a reasonable campsite.

John Parker, 23 April.

Caving meet, Ingleton. 29-31 November 1991

Feeling keen to start the weekend with a soaking, Mr. Tolley my brother and I had snuck up early Friday afternoon to have a look down Lost John's pot. Located on 'private' land somewhere on Leck Fell, you're supposed to have a permit to explore, even though the entrance is only yards from the road. But we reckoned no-one would bother checking at that time of the week, and so went permitless. All went well until we emerged, grinning, to be confronted by a small man with a large gun, not grinning. My brother and I explained as best we could that it was our grandfathers fiftieth birthday next weekend, and that this trip was his birthday treat. Luckily the man saw the funny side and let us go, but it was a close thing.

Anyway the next day Mick deserted us with the lame excuse that he'd promised to show a group of boy scouts a good time. Which meant that with no spiritual leader the rest of the team soon floundered, and a somewhat disorganised day came to pass.

Over breakfast in the smart new cafe upstairs in Inglesports a plan of action soon emerged. Sometime afterwards another one emerged, then another, and another and so on. Pretty soon it would be lunch time, and then tea time, and then with luck, opening time at the Marton Arms. But unfortunately having reserved 10 lamps we couldn't now easily back out, so reluctantly the 'A' (for Organised) team head off for Ireby fell Cavern, the 'B' (for Disorganised) for Marble Steps, the final plan being to rig the pots, root about a bit, then swap over and derig, the two pots being only a few hundred yards apart. For some reason I find I'm in the 'B' team.

So there we all are by the side of the road in all the latest gear - Dave Cundy looking smart in matching new boots and panties, Simon Fenna dressed for the beach in characteristic surfing mode, John Tats in squeaky new wet suit looking something like a cross between an over inflated barrage balloon and a Michelin woman's favourite sexual fantasy, the rest of us in a various assortment of bin liners, wellies and rubber macs. We stumble across the moors and down our respective holes.

Phil Caley, Hal, Mr. T., Mr. C and myself take what's left of the tackle and rig the first long ladder pitch down Marble Steps which takes us about 120 feet under, the idea being to abseil in and climb out. Its not too vertical though, and it would just about be possible to escape without the ladder. At the bottom it's fairly open, and another shorter pitch takes us down into the main chamber. From here it should be another two pitches down to the bottom, but we have no more gear, so instead just spend some time crawling along and exploring various passages with not much of an idea exactly what's what. Where not in the B team for no reason. We discover various entrances down into the area known as The Intestines, and from what we can see, the name is suitably descriptive. It looks tight, tortuous, and is probably not the place to be during tea time. Several hours have already passed, so we retreat gratefully, surface leaving the gear in place, and make our way over the moors to Ireby Fell Cavern.

Although fairly close, the two pots are very different in character. The entrance to Marble Steps is grand and unmistakeable and looks the part. To get down Ireby fell Cavern you climb unceremoniously down a drain pipe pointing skyward out of a stream. There is the constant sound of running water above you, below you, down the inside of your trouser leg. We follow it, descending ladders left by the A team - smart, well organised looking ladders - and above the noise we hear familiar whooping from below. Down the next pitch we find Mr. Tats no longer looking quite so sexy, little John looking like he'd had enough before breakfast, major Hickman still with the creases in his trousers, Simon Fenna enthusing about the surfing potential, and bro, still grinning. We exchange notes and keep moving. The route continues to follow the stream, and once down the next pitch carries on for what seems like miles along a meandering underground bobsleigh run, just wide enough to walk along. Once or twice the roof gets too low, so you have to crawl along in the water, but otherwise its OK. We get to the final pitch, but its getting late, so decide to turn back and derig. No problem, except for the bit when Hal decided to test Mr. Cundy's belay on the last ladder by the sudden execution of an impressive 180 degree mid ascent longitudinal inversion.

In a while we're all out in the fresh air. Dave Paul and I emerge last and head off eastwards back to the car, only to discover on arrival that Phil and Hal have gone west, and are nowhere to be seen. Must have been that bump on the head. Simultaneously, somewhere down Marble Steps, Mr. Hickman, in a fine display of attention seeking behaviour also falls off a ladder, and breaks a wrist. The ploy works and Claire, who has just arrived for the evening, offers comfort while taking him to hospital for emergency repairs. After a little more running around induced by threats from Mr. Inglesports to use the meet leader's driving licence, given as deposit for the lamps, as toilet paper should all the equipment not be accounted for by the end of the evening, the rest of us also finally end up where, with any sense, we should perhaps have been in the first place - sat round the pool table in the Marton Arms.

Sunday was altogether more together. We are now joined by Mr. Earle, Les Ward, Libby and Jason. Mr. Tolley, who has by now had his fill of boy scouts, also joins us, and immediately the motley crew from the day before takes on the fresh appearance of a pot holding machine with a mission. We had decided upon Bar pot on the Clapham side of Ingleborough, the attraction being that you end up in Gaping Gill, the largest chamber in Britain, with water from Fell Beck pouring through a hole in the roof 364 feet above. It's apparently large enough to contain St. Paul's Cathedral. A good time was had by all, but particularly by Mr. Earle, who was so gobsmacked by the event that he didn't even notice when some guy surfed in from nowhere and took a large bite out of his precious lump of cheese. Mind you, it was pretty dark down there.

For information, a lamp and battery cost £2.60 for a days hire, two caravans cost £40 for the weekend, we all paid £5 per day for the experience and so managed to put £12 profit into the caving fund.

#### ANNUAL CLUB DINNER, SCAEFELL HOTEL

December 1991

A good dinner was had by all (or rather those lucky enough to survive the labyrinthine booking system). The 1992 organization should be more straightforward - though it would appear that being seen to be fair by all is a very difficult if not impossible task - outraged ladies from Dalton please take note that I would be forever in their debt if, this year, they refrain from demonstrating their pugilistic skills until I've put my two pints down on a table.

Dave Dundy received 'Mug of the Year' for landing in a very conspicuous tree while parapenting and Phil Lee received 'Lush of the Year' for his legendary exploits during his first six months of association. Later that night, he fell off a tree at Stair while attempting to learn how to front point - a technique better grasped if one retains one's grasp of one's axe.

It must have been a good dinner because I can't remember anything else apart from a very tasty vase of flowers.

Ed.

#### BEAN FEAST STAIR

January 1992

This meet with no meat was well attended as usual thanks to Irene's and Paul's? superb cullinary skills which seem to improve year by year. The climbing was so insignificant in comparison to the food that I've forgotten who did what or whether anything got done at all!

Ed.



## WORKING WEEKEND LITTLE LANGDALE

January

This meet was promoted by Donald as a fairly casual affair where little work would be required.

As it turned out, an extensive clean-up of the hut was undertaken, followed by the gastronomic delights of Donald's cooking. A session in the pub saw work started on painting the glossy bits a very delicate and subdued shade of poppy red. As Donald prepared to retire, I remarked that he wasn't running true to form as he appeared to have survived his stew and plonk without having to converse on the big white telephone. This remark proved to be premature.

About one o'clock, there was heard the sound of a large bag of bones being thrown down the stairs, followed by a splash and then a dull thud - which sounded for all the world like a skull making violent contact with the edge of a solid and securely fixed item of porcelain furniture. From time to time, as I painted, eerily echoing sounds emanated from behind the door, sometimes guttural, sometimes high pitched, sometimes soft and low - like the sound of a humpback whale in heat heard from 100 miles away. About three o'clock, we had run out of paint and whiskey and so prepared to bed. The sight, upon opening the door was like something out of a 'Texas Chainsaw Massacre' movie. Imagine our relief when closer inspection revealed that the lumps of 'raw meat' splattered liberally on the stairs and walls were only bits of carrot and apparently unchewed lumps of tinned tomato!

The next day dawned bright and early as we slithered down the stairs to find that Donald had given up his passionate embrace of the loo and had gone to bed. There then followed another extensive clean-up of the hut followed by a battle with a tree in the Black Hole. This time, Phil Lee was the victor by virtue of a refined and ingenious ice-climbing technique which involves the mindbendingly difficult and sustained feat of remembering not to let go of one's axes.

The miserable weekend's weather was only surpassed by Donald's ghetto blaster which incessantly retched forth a variety of obscure and apparently formless orchestral works the like of which I never wish to hear again.

Ed. (again!)

## CASEG FRAITH, OGWEN

January

Caseg Fraith is a superb hut belonging to UMC situated just below Helyg with a fine view of Tryfan. One day on this weekend was the stuff that dreams are made of - sharp, clear skies, calm air and just about freezing at the hut. John Bailey, Frank Towne, Gary Seddington and I set off for the North Ridge of Tryfan, overtook a very frail looking Duck en route (who was still recovering from his working weekend), and fought our way through the summit crowds to the foot of Bristly Ridge which, from below, seemed mantled in a thin shroud of frost and verglas. A most enjoyable scramble then ensued, only marred by the absence of any ice on the holds - presumably kept clear by the passage of traffic. Luckily, this ridge can sustain a fair number without seeming crowded. Extensive views were had on top and a pleasant descent down the Caseg fraith ridge led to the hut as dusk fell. The inner glow outlasted that of the sunset for quite some time.

Ed. (yet again!)

## LAGANGARH

February

After a somewhat bleary start on Saturday morning, most people went up the hill looking for good snow and ice. Not much was found.

I was nursing a hangover and didn't want to try to keep up with a semi-fit team all day so a decision was made to go north while the others went south. A slow walk from the hut along a corniced ridge led to the shoulder of Am Bodach. By the time the craggy bit arrived so had leg cramps and common sense dictated that a descent back to the hut was in order. However, having been cooped-up for a couple of weeks doing nothing but work, the lust for an epic prevailed. Secure in my total lack

of knowledge of what lay ahead and, bolstered by half a ton of climbing gear, extra woolies and a supposedly good set of waterproofs, I stumbled on.

The panorama was majestic with the Ben sharp and clear as crystal. The first obstacle was a steep climb down the end of a ridge which appeared from the top to be plastered in crusty, well trodden snow and the odd bit of water ice. As an abseil anchor was being sought, two people appeared below with radios sticking out of their sacks. Pride then asserted itself and the abseil was relinquished for a more aesthetic but rather more worrying down-climb. As it turned out, all the ice and most of the snow on the holds could be avoided and the descent was accomplished at a controlled rate.

Thus committed, the ridge staggered on below, only one short section needing spurring with a Terrordactyl adze. A maze of pinnacles which seemed to go on forever between Meall Dearg and Stob Coire Leith was picked through with some moments of doubt as to whether the route would remain solo-able. It did, however, and Sgor nam Fionnaidh lurched underfoot just as the weather began to close in.

A total of twenty minutes were spent donning overtrousers and cag in the lee of the summit shelter - partly due to the wind, but mostly due to my then advanced state of nackedness. During this time darkness had begun to descend and it wasn't too long before the head torch came out - almost totally useless in dark, mist and rain - but still better than nothing. After half a mile, the same could said of my waterproofs.

The Clachaig was finally attained at 8.30 after bum-sliding most of the way down a steep, craggy hillside between the safe descent route towards the Pap of Glencoe and the crags just west of Clachaig gully. After being stuck in a bog up to the knees just 20 yards from the road, I was not a pretty sight, and hitching only succeeded when within a quarter of a mile of the pub.

While shivering through several pints waiting for a pre-arranged lift to appear, a bloke came up dressed in the same pile bunny suit as me. For some reason he wanted his mates to judge who was more fitted to model this particular item of apparel. As the prize was a pint of beer, I

couldn't refuse. He struck quite an athletic figure, while I forced myself semi-upright and presented a rather more rotund profile. I won! A fitting end to what could have been (and almost was) my last epic.

(Guess Who?)

#### CHESTER HUT SWAP LLANBERIS

#### MARCH

The meet leader's passage to Llanberis was not without incident. Firstly, he filled his car up with fuel and then went to pay with his Switch card. The filling station did not take Switch! Luckily, the attendant was a good guy. The coast road then threw out one of its frequent jams and the pub began to look dodgy. Foot on the unpaid-for gas, however, and the last half an hour's drinking was had in the boring Victoria in Llanberis. A small band of enthusiasts were assembled plus a token Chester member who couldn't get in to his club's over-booked Stair swap.

In the cold grey light of a Llanberis dawn (Roscoe taught me that one!) the rain hurtled down. We were treated to not one, but three brews in bed by the erstwhile Morris and, one by one, our bladders burst. The usual scenario followed. Leisurely breakfast; shops in Llanberis - Gingers, Joes, Outside, then Petes for a brew, then which pub? The rain still lashed down. Watching England complete the grand slam against Wales was a distinct possibility. The couples had gone to the Llyn to hold hands between pubs along the coast. The odd other loony, Forrest, had actually gone on the hill. Our little team decided to have a look at Llandudno. A bit of lightening in the cloud cover spurred us on, but when we pulled up at Parisella's Cafe on the Orme, cags had to be donned more or less immediately. Yes it was rainy, but there was the odd team doing a bit. They all packed up soon after we had arrived! The rain eased so we set to a couple of routes. Myself and Mick Tolley on Firefly, E3, 5c, and Kevin Stephens and Dave Ball on Silver Surfer, E3, 6a. Tough do for the first route of the year. However, with a bit of grit and determination, I managed to reach the top - or rather the lower-offs which are now in place at the top of all the do-able routes. I lowered off just as the rain set in again. Kevin hadn't been successful. Everyone top-roped our route with varying degrees of success. Kevin gracefully, Mick



ungracefully and Dave - well, two reaches and he'd passed the crux only to pump out one move later. He's a tall lad! Meanwhile, Kev had launched himself up what he thought to be an E2. It wasn't so he had to come down. It wasn't his day. He then did the correct E2. The small overhang proving tough for Dave. In the meantime, my leader had pointed me at the classic Excursion, E2, 5b, which I ascended cautiously as Mick chatted up the locals and joggers. England had won. We visited the Pigeon Caves then retreated to Llanberis via the usual Good Beer Guide tick, this time in Llanfairfechan. After tea we enjoyed a fairly pleasant evening's drinking in the Heights thankful that we had done something on a day which was not promising at all.

Sunday was much better! Sun! - still cold, however. People went on the hill and Phil Morris and Jan went to Tremadoc, or was it Portmerion? Our team had been blagged by the meet leader to sample the slate. The initial pull up past winding houses from the car park was a bit of an effort but this was rewarded by a dry and empty Rainbow Slab. Kevin opted for Pull My Daisy, E2/3, 5c. which he had done before but would be a good warming up. The route I had come to do required a bit of psyching up for so I thought we would warm up on a nice little Nick Harms (ex FMC member) route, The Spleenal Flick E3, 6a. The bolts were very close together which was to Mick's liking and mine as the route turned out to be a bit hard, technical and strenuous. Something we were trying to avoid! However, success followed and the problem was what they call 'flashed'. Mick was glad of the profusion of metalmen. Something more sedate was called for. Red Yellow Pink and Green etc. etc. is E1, 5a - no runners. It is very pleasant and not too difficult if you don't look down. Mick and Dave followed happily. Kevin paced about below Spleenal Flick. We returned to base and it was obvious I was going to have to try Poetry Pink E3, 6b (so they say). We had trouble bouldering out the start and those bolts at 40 feet looked a long way away! A good nut relieved the tension a bit and the bolts were clipped. Passing them was ok but with them at foot level, the difficulties really began. A very long reach enabled a couple of holds to be gained at full stretch. However, a couple of spills and a change of boots passed before I urged my body upwards to the "horrific mantleshelf" move where your second becomes a sprinter or a doctor! I looked down at Mick picking his nose and carried on. The mantle was ok and, with a bolt clipped, so were the next moves on to the Rainbow itself. A few delicate steps and I was on good holds, runners, a tricky move then the belay - in the bag. Not bad for early March I

thought. Mick declined, so Kevin took the second showing that a reach is a distinct advantage on this route. Be warned any tickers! It had gotten very chilly so the cafe was looking favourite. Petes Eats, then Mick wanted more, so in the setting sun we floated up Scarlet Runner E4, 6a, at Bus Stop Quarry to end the day on a high note. At about this time, Dave was driving his car into a ditch after taking a photo of the sunset and setting off again without releasing his steering lock!

Beers in Frodsham as is traditional ended a stonking meet with a couple of early mug of the years thrown in!

Martin Dale

### CIC HUT, BEN NEVIS

#### March

The weather for this meet promised to be poor so only myself, Phil Lee, Phil Caley and Hal turned up at the hut on a Sunday evening. As it turned out, the weather was even worse than expected.

The Sunday walk-in was done in reasonably fine conditions. The next day, having realized that we didn't have enough booze to last the week and, on account of the pouring rain, we walked back down to Fort Bill, had a swim in the heated pool, replenished our supplies, and walked back to the hut - still in the pouring rain!

On Tuesday, the weather turned slightly better with only an average strength blizzard punctuated by the odd micro-second of sunshine. The first foray from the hut was to answer a call of nature which resulted in a frost nipped rear-end caused by the thorough sandblasting that the 60mph ice crystal laden wind had given me. Later on, conditions slightly improved and we set off for Carn Mor Dearg Arete with the hope of reaching the summit of the Ben. The arete slope was composed of about 1' of freshly blown snow overlying older, hard snow, so we hugged the foot of the upper rocks as much as possible. On nearing the top, the underlying substratum gave way to ice, which made movement rather interesting since we hadn't bothered to put crampons on. As soon as all were on the arete, the blizzard thickened and increased in force to the extent that it was too painful to open our eyes. With all thoughts of the summit abandoned, we abseiled blindly down the slope for two rope



lengths using the abseil posts and then stumbled straight down the powder - still with our eyes closed. Upon opening them, we found we may as well not have bothered as we could only see the ground for about 2' ahead. More stumbling followed in occasionally deep powder until level with the Douglas Boulder where we dropped below the cloud base. The coffee, Grouse, Rum, J. Daniels and Martini was much appreciated upon reaching the hut and a clear, frosty night followed which enabled us to make enough ice for the Martinis to last us the week.

Wednesday was a mixture of low cloud, rain and blizzard, and as far as I can remember, no-one ventured outside the hut. Many hands of Bridge and Crib followed with many rounds of drinks of varying % proof. I was beginning to regret my decision to give up smoking when Hal saved the day by discovering a packet of rolling papers stapled to the wall above a bunk. These, combined with the contents of a few unused teabags provided much relief.

We awoke on Thursday suffering from cabin fever and found the weather to be much the same as Wednesday. With no booze or teabags left to sustain us, enough was enough, and down we went, never to return (until next year).

Ed.

#### MUIR OF INVEREY

April

The Cairngorm Club provided this magnificent abode situated some 5 miles upstream of Braemar. It consists of an old cottage to which has been added several roomy dormitories and the usual toilet facilities. The essence of the hut is spaciousness.

In common with several other recent Scottish hut meets, attendance was very light and the Club will need to consider hard its use of Scottish huts in the future. Perhaps partial bookings or teaming up with other clubs might be an answer.

A superb Friday afternoon was not to be wasted so Mike and I strolled to the top of the Calf on the Howgills before continuing northwards. It was, of necessity, late when we arrived at Muir, but the

secretary and Clive Bell turned out to greet us nevertheless. They had been up all week and had been using bicycles to cut out the long approach marches to the mountains. Mt Keen, the most easterly Munro had just been ticked off and trips had been made up Glen Geldie and Glen Derry in the quest for obscure excrescences of the earth's crust above the magic 3000 feet. Clive sported a black eye where he had gone over the handlebars and a red zipper all the way up his chest where some manic surgeon had given him a new heart and lungs. Like me he was a sick man.

Saturday dawned dull and drizzly but eventually brightened up. Both parties went up the Dee to White Bridge. The cyclists made for Carn Cloich Mhuicma on the west of the Dee and the walkers followed the east bank of the same river about twice as far to the Corrour Bothy under Cairn Toul. The bothy was found to be in excellent order but readers should note that the Sinclair hut has been demolished. The Devil's Point was almost clear and glowered above the little cottage, but the rest of the hill was firmly in the clag and showers scurried across the glen from time to time. The going had been very wet underfoot and had been a bit like plodding along the Pennine Way with scenery to look at. The mountains either side of the Lairig Ghru are magnificent indeed. A return was made via Glen Luibeg and Derry Lodge, a one-time venue for the FMC, now scandalously bricked up against all-comers.

Sunday dawned wetter but surprisingly brightened considerably to give a day of sunshine and showers with a witheringly cold wind. Jock's Road, a footpath from Braemar to Glen Clova was followed to the far end of Loch Callater to give an easy walk of great beauty protected from the worst of the weather. It is an easy stroll to the Lake and is well worth a couple of hours of anyone's time, especially in reverse. We tried to catch the Fylde's answer to Bionic Man on the way back but failed to make any impression. The new plumbing certainly works.

The drive home was enlivened by a cat and mouse game with several police Range Rovers but eventually someone else became the victim. Having just driven from Lugano to Calais by motorway with just one small tunnel closed for repair, it was interesting to count 30 miles of roadworks on the way home.

Dave Earle

## FALLCLIFFE

April

Fallcliffe was its usual slightly dog-eared self when we arrived Friday night. The Moon, it seemed, had slipped from grace and only a handful of members were to be found there Friday night. Driving up Friday night had also slipped from favour and though we had a full hut, half the team arrived Saturday morning.

The weather was blustery with a brisk south westerly, suprisingly cold, and blue sky interrupted by the odd fierce shower. The author devoted himself to the Manifold and Hamps valleys whilst the rock climbers flitted between damp crags and the pub. The afternoon was continuously dry and many splendid routes were done on the grit.

Drinkers were scattered over the four corners of Derbyshire but all ended up in the Sir William just down the road from the hut, and somewhat improved. After too long a session for some, Sunday creaked slowly into gear. The meet was divided between Rivelin and Birchens. Would the author get in his first route of the year? In order to qualify for entry to the next Club Dinner he did touch rock but the rest of the team retreated to the Robin Hood to avoid the showers so he went for a walk. Eventually the afternoon brightened and the rock was graced by the FMC.

It was just as well the Meet Leader was not present because after the author had spent Saturday evening browsing through the hut copy of the Daily Spor his blood stream was so coursing with hormones he probably would have carried out unspeakable acts of depravity on her innocent body.

As it was, he acquired some very interesting 0898 numbers to ring. One lady promised to moan and groan like there was no tomorrow but the author decided to ring Donald instead and ask him how his financial situation was getting on as it would be a lot cheaper.

Dave Earle

## PEMBROKE

May

This meet proved even more popular than the last with all available accommodation at the farm (about 30 places) being fully booked under the able auspices of Dave Wood. All the accommodation was also taken up which is in stark contrast to most of the away meets we've had this year.

The weather was superb and the sea cliffs a sun trap. Lots of routes were ascended and lots of ale supped. A veritable paradise!

Ed.

## ARRAN

May

Yet another meet with superb weather! The A'Chir ridge was done in fine style with me getting my revenge on a certain belligerent young lady from Dalton; lots of routes were done in Glen Rosa, lots of tops were topped, lots of pints were downed in the Ormidale and lots of waves were windsurfed in Brodick Bay.

Besides myself and little John, the team included; John Hickman, Clare Addy, Blair Rogers, Phil Caley, Mary Kindred, Hal, Phil Lee, and the Tolley entourage. Some quite sensibly avoided staying on the primitive camp site and took up residence in B&B or holiday chalets. The more hardy amongst us were serenaded every night by a bunch of drunken scots youths who provided some entertainment by following Phil Caley's tent around the site on a day-to-day basis. After the first night, most of us solved the problem by getting drunker and staying up later than the scots

Ed. (again!)

## INSHIFFHAOLAIN

June

This meet produced two consecutive days of hot, sunny weather with crystal clear air and magnificent vistas. The team comprised; Phil Lee and myself, Martin Pickup, Mike Dagger, Paul Garner!, Andy Dunhill and three from Leeds who made up the otherwise poor numbers for such a superb weekend.

Etive slabs was attacked on Saturday with routes such as Spartan Slab, Swastika, Hammer, and Pinch Direct being ascended. Phil and I did Spartan Slab which provided some superb pitches of MVS climbing apart from one diabolical overhang which was only conquered by a somewhat overweight leader upon resorting to the Alpine tactic of standing in a sling. The day was extremely hot, and the need to quench our thirsts proved greater than the lure of another route. Believe it or not, Phil and I drove straight past the Kingshouse and Clachaig to the Spar shop in Ballachulish and consumed vast quantities of chilled soft drinks. However, the chemical imbalance thus created was later restored by a convivial evening session in the pub.

Sunday was fresher and clearer and, after tidying up the hut and burying the contents of an overweight chemiloo each team went their separate ways. Phil and I went up to Rannoch Wall intent on doing 'January Jigsaw'. However, the crag was even more crowded than Shepherd's and we had to content ourselves with Agag's Groove followed by a scramble to the top of the Buachaille, returning by way of Coire na Tulaich. This outing proved very worthwhile, made even better by the summit panorama.

Ed. (yet again!)

## INTRO MEMBERS MEET - STAIR

June

Quite a team gathered in the Swinny on the Friday night: Phil Morris - who announced his engagement to Jan; myself, Phil Caley, Dave Cundy, Phil Lee, Tony, Graham, John Tats, Andrew, Kevin, Andy & Christine. Frank & John Bailey turned up early on Saturday, eager to get something done.

I wasn't so eager, being thoroughly tired out before I'd even begun the walk. However, we set off for Gable from Seathwaite, but I soon decided to let the team stride on ahead. A leisurely walk, sunbathing and watching the waterfall from a distance, sunbathing by the waterfall and sunbathing by the tarn, and then reversing the process, seemed an infinitely better idea - and happily took all day. The rest of the team, incidentally, did worthwhile things on the Napes side of Gable (Abbey Buttress, Arrowhead Ridge Direct & Eagle's Nest Ridge Direct) while Andy and Kevin went off to Scafell to bag some 'E' points.

In the evening more people turned up - Paul Taylor, Mike Tolley, Glen Brookes, Martin Dale and Libby. It was time to give my new climbing tights their debut. Purchased with the intention of out-Cundyng Dave Cundy, they're a complete garish clash of every primary colour and pattern that can be squeezed on to one bum and a pair of legs. After everyone had exercised some wit at their expense (Tolley informed me that they were "nauseating"), Dave went quiet and I knew I had succeeded - and settled back to enjoy the rest of the evening.

The next day I was feeling guilty and, seriously determined to get something done, set off for Quayfoot Buttress to do my first ever route with Kevin. At the foot of the route we emptied out our gear, only to be eaten alive by a swarm of hostile midges. Throwing the gear back into the sacks and descending faster than we'd come up, we met the rest of the team and moved on to Woden's Face.

Once there, it threatened rain. We looked from the rock to the clouds and to each other. There were loud mutterings about the pub, but the rain held off. As we'd no excuse, we set about doing some routes.



This time with Phil Caley I conquered a VS, but it took me fifteen minutes to get off the ground. Then once more the rain threatened - or the pub beckoned. Either way we set off for Keswick.

The food was fairly bland and the pub not worth remembering - except not to go there again. We set off for the inevitable gear shops, bought little, and went back to the hut with the intention to pack up and retire to Castle Rock where Phil Lee and Tony had gone.

Once back at the hut, in front of hot coffee and biscuits, Castle Rock didn't seem so appealing. We decided to wend our way home while John Tats and Andrew went to Shepherd's and did Eve to keep the team flag flying. (Several team flags had been kept flying all day by most of the others. Ed.)

Admittedly, not a very inspiring leadership from the Social Secretary for the weekend ..... But I must have stunned Keswick with those tights!

Rebecca Hargreaves

#### HUT TO HUT

June

This annual event proved to be reasonably popular and was ably organised by Dave Wood who did the unenviable job of ferrying everyone's gear.

Those who completed the walk included Donald, Dave Earle, Mike Penn, John and June Wiseman, and a character who put me to shame by walking over Crinkle Craggs and then having lunch in the ODG before continuing.

Hal and myself did a shorter walk from the Three Shire Stone to the Swinside via; Crinkle Craggs, Bowfell, Esk Pike, Great Gable, Dale Head, Maiden Moor and Cat Bells; climbing Bowfell Buttress and Needle Ridge along the way. This trip was not without incident as every time a distant pub came in to view Hal was reduced to a whimpering wreck for about 5 minutes while she fought against the temptation to immediately run down and slake her thirst. This was finally accomplished at the Honister Youth Hostel where she consumed about a gallon of water from a

tap surrounded by signs warning that the water was unfit for drinking! As we neared the Swinside, Hal picked up speed in a manner only normally seen in desert areas when a herd of camels sense a nearby oasis. I laboured on at a more sedate pace and eventually reached the Swinside at about ten o'clock, where Hal appeared to be more than adequately refreshed, having reached the pub about an hour before me.

Ed.

#### CHESTER SWOP LLANBERIS

June

This weekend saw the last of the phenomenally long period of superb weather which had started in early May.

Amongst the host of routes completed by various teams were Dave Cundy's and Paul Taylor's ascent of The Grooves on Cymr Las and Phil Caley's, Hal's and Andrew's ascent of Longlands Direct on Cloggy.

I had one the best days on the hill ever when Phil Lee and I ascended East Wall Girdle, Javelin Buttress and The Arete on Idwal, followed by Grey Slab on Glyder Fawr, rounded off by Manx Wall on Clogwyn Du. This latter route, although short, must rate as one of the best severes in the country.

Ed.

#### THE 1991 FMC (International) FELL RACE

Reasonable conditions if a trifle warm awaited the 22 runners who turned up for this, the 14th running of the FMC fell race.

As regulars will know, this is a handicap event. Runners set off at intervals and (if the handicapper has done his job right) all cross the line together at 12 noon.

The first over the line (not necessarily, or ever so far the fastest) wins the coveted Jack Fairburn Trophy which is presented at the Annual Dinner. Guest runner Tim White was fastest in 35.10 (1 minute 21 seconds outside the course record) but 1st over the line was Jill Harrison. Full results are given below in order of crossing the line.

Handicap		Actual	
Position	Name	Time	Position
1	Jill Harrison	49.31	12
2	Christine Barbier	53.43	16
3	Tim White (Guest)	35.10	1
4	Don Nichol	42.33	8
5	Michael Dagger	35.55	2
6	Stu Gascoine	36.07	3
7	Martin Pickup	36.15	4
8	Andy Dunhill	41.34	7
9	John Grigg (Guest)	46.45	10
10	Mark Broughton	37.22	5
11	Phil Caley	48.50	11
12	Vivian Broughton	50.46	13
13	Howard Adamson	41.05	6
14	Gareth Roberts	51.06	14
15	Anne Marie Barbier (Guest)	67.12	20
16	Virginia Tattersall	64.10	19
17	Dave Wiseman	45.45	9
18	Clare Barbier (Guest)	69.42	21
19	Jason Pitman	52.22	15
20	Libby Hacking	57.44	17
21	Rebecca Hargreaves	75.30	22
22	Rod Stables	60.31	18

An injured John Tattersall offered to be timekeeper and used his own peculiar method which tried the patience of Stu Gascoine to sort out. Something to do with the second hand being out of sync. and having to add a minute on to the time of anyone who finished after 20 seconds past. Well it made sense to Tatts so who's arguing.

Beer and hot dogs were enjoyed by all and Stu Gascoine triumphed in the raft race later in the afternoon. I'm sure he will treasure the 'Golden Duck' award.

It would be nice to have a good turn out for the 15th event in 1992 and I would like to see as many as possible of the original 1978 competitors turning out to see if they can beat their 1978 times. So how about it folks!

Martin Pickup.

#### THE 1992 ANNUAL FMC FELL RACE

Obviously, Martin's last paragraph is a bit out of date thanks to me. I'm not sure what effect the late publication of this newsletter had on the number of entries for 1992 as the event is scheduled on every member's Club Calendar. Anyway, sorry Martin.

Martin did give me an optional list of the 1978 runners and riders, and this, contrasted with the 1992 results tells it's own story. Let's hope 1993's produces a mega-turnout for the 16th Anniversary.

Handicap	NINETEEN SEVENTY EIGHT		NINETEEN NINETY TWO	
Position	Name	Time	Name	Time
1	Pete Roscoe	45.30	John K. Tattersall (age 14)	53.21
2	Paul Garner	43.04	Kevin Dagger (age 11, Guest)	53.22
3	Fred Snalam	48.00	Mike Dagger (Guest)	35.32
4	Dave Archer	40.00	Martin Pickup	36.55
5	Ray Varley	48.00	Stu Gascoine	38.46
6	Barrie Crook	50.05	Rebecca Hargreaves	72.00
7	Barbara Sealey	58.04	-	-
8	Martin Dale	40.15	-	-
9	Martin Pickup	43.02	-	-
10	John Sealey	49.00	-	-
11	Chris Heald	38.03	-	-
12	Dave Clarke	50.15	-	-
13	Ed Craig	42.00	-	-
14	Liz Rawcliffe	121.45	-	-
15	Cherry Earle	60.30	-	-
16	Robin Norris	36.30	-	-
17	Tony Farrell	52.00	-	-
18	George Parker	57.00	-	-
19	John Hamilton	38.00	-	-
20	Sandy ?	58.02	-	-
21	Jill ?	59.00	-	-
22	Jack Jowett	79.00	-	-

23	Di Norris	62.00	-	-
24	Rupert	50.00	-	-
25	Dave Walton	48.00	-	-
26	Gerry Senior	57.00	-	-
27	Stan Stephenson	49.00	-	-
28	Dave Greenalgh	62.00	-	-
29	Margaret ?	64.00	-	-

The only other person at Little Langdale besides the 1992 entrants was me, who had to make the hot dogs as well as do the timekeeping (equipped with a digital watch this time!).

Stuart Gascoine again won the Golden Duck Award in a three duck race with Martin (who retained his glasses this time) coming second and John Tatts Jr. third.

The spare beer which resulted from the poor turn-out and lack of faith in the booking system (i.e a large number usually turn up without booking) was donated to the Cwm Cywarch meet. Please note that only members who book in advance with Martin will be entitled to hot-dogs and drinks next year.

Ed.

#### BIVVY MEET, STAIR

August

A look at the weather forecast for this weekend ruled out any prospect of bivvying and the newsletter paraphernalia was taken to the hut instead of the bivvy bag and karrimat. Despite the weather, the meet was relatively well attended by the following:

Dave Wood, Trevor Atkinson and mate, Phil Caley, Dave Cundy, Richard Stevenson, Paul & Irene Taylor, Mike Tolley, Martin Dale, Steve Wrigley, John Hickman, Clare Addy and myself.

A few of us made it as far as the base of Bleak Howe Buttress before Saturday's rain set in for the day. There then followed a prolonged pool session in the Swinside while waiting for the weather to clear (which it didn't). No progress was made on the newsletter until

Irene Taylor kindly volunteered her typing skills. This resulted in all of Dave Earle's articles being faithfully transferred to the word processor. Thanks Irene.

Sunday's weather was much better, but much to my dismay, a mass exodus to Hodge Close Quarry (of all places!) got underway, leaving me (who regards slate as a poor substitute for a climbing wall) in the hut without a climbing partner. This resulted in another couple of articles being transferred to the newsletter.

Apart from Martin leading an E5 at Hodge Close, the only other positive thing to come out of this meet was that the long - overdue newsletter had been started!

Ed.

#### GLEN BRITTLE

August

On Saturday morning, Phil Caley, John Hickman and myself set off from Blackpool, Trevor Atkinson and his mate Steve set off from Darwen and, last but not least (but probably a little later) Blair Rogers set off from Inverness. All converged on the BMC memorial hut in Glen Brittle via various watering holes such as the Sligachan Hotel and the Old Inn at Carbost. Most of the party were filled with anticipation of the superb routes waiting to be done in the Cuillin, but I, having consulted the weather oracles, again took along the embryo newsletter for company.

Sunday's dawn was barely noticeable with a very large volume of water (the term rain seems a little euphemistic) hurtling through the skies. Most of the day was spent idling in the Sligachan, but with 80 shillings costing £1.50 per pint and the excellent 'Sligachan Ale' costing £1.60 per pint, it soon became clear that sitting in the boozier would be unsustainable for the entire holiday.

On Sunday night, the RAF mountain rescue team who were sensibly based at the Old Inn informed us that the forecast for Monday was more rain, heavy at times, with the chance of snow on the tops, and winds gusting to 100mph. As a traverse of the ridge could be deemed to be a



foot of rope absolutely terrifying. Team Tattersall made it to within 100 yards of the hotel before having to put on chains and Dave and Kath arrived by air to Milan and then by train.

The snow throughout the holiday was superb. Enormous quantities had fallen immediately before as the author discovered as he left the starlit French side of the Alps and emerged from the Tende Tunnel into a raging Italian blizzard. Friday and Saturday were warm and sunny with perfect snow, an absolute delight to ski on. The following week sunshine intermingled with cloud but always with fresh overnight snow to ski on. Every day provided different skiing conditions. The weather precluded any mountaineering trips or visits to other resorts but the holiday never became boring thanks to the infinite variety of snow, both pisted and unpisted. With the previously poor snow conditions many people had cancelled and except for the weekends we had almost our own private resort.

The hotel was, as always, warm and comfortable and the food plentiful. Some of us early arrivals were lucky enough to spend two nights at a mountain hut, drinking, chatting and singing before skiing down by torchlight. In this year's absence of the dramatically falling Mr Penn, everyone reached the hotel safely.

The centre of the universe at Bormio proved to be the mountain restaurant called La Rocca where we had our two meals on the mountain, run by the beautiful Marcia who converted the author from a bosom man to a bottom man in a trice, and her elegant and sensitive sister Gabriella whose quiet beauty haunts the author still.

Rarely could we ignore the magnetism of this place and frequent visits resulted in the consumption of huge quantities of 'Bianca Sporca', a white wine with fruit syrup which proved to be both delicious and very inexpensive compared to beer and to the cans of 'pop' which John Tattersall Junior consumed. Little Tats proved to be the human dynamo of the holiday. Whenever you looked around he was there, grinning from ear to ear and enjoying himself hugely.

It was late on the last Friday at 'La Rocca'. The weather had closed in and I left the warmth and comfort for the raging white out with trepidation. I may have jinked to the left, I might have jinked to the right but in the conditions it was difficult to be sure. But anyway I was down safe and well.

Due to the conditions we drove home via the Italian Lakes and Lugano, a longer but very attractive drive, enjoyed by those who had not previously seen this delectable corner of the globe. Prizes for navigation were awarded to Janet and Team Tatts who, after great instruction, still drove down the wrong side of Lake Como, in a large tunnel and had to get the ferry across half way down.

Many thanks to Gordon, Frank and all those present, both members and hotel personnel, for such an enjoyable and good humoured holiday.

Dave Earle

#### AN IRISH TRILGY

An Bealach Rhunda E1, 5b - County Antrim

We'd had a lock-in of course and now were paying the price. Late morning saw three vagabonds stumbling through the maze of boulders along the foot of Fair Head, looking for 'The secret way' up the highest part of the cliff.

The first pitch of 50 metres followed a series of chimneys requiring such techniques as can only be learned on V Diffs in Wales. As the pitch unfolded, so the cracks widened until the insecurity of it became all too much. Back against a 30m pillar and feet across to the right, I leapfrogged a pair of massive friends (thanks Mick) up a dirty crack for 15 metres or more. Eventually I joined them in the crack and struggled on to a rather pleasant coffee table.

Jan followed, struggled a bit and decided she didn't like the chimneying. Exhausted, she joined me on the ledge. Dave cruised it, being an old git of the Welsh school.

No one liked the look of the next bit. A steep wall, then a massive stride across the void and on to the top of a detached pillar. A fallen flake leaning against the main face bridged the gap above. The wall beyond the flake led to the crux - a thin, weaving crackline which curved up to a series of short corners, a blank groove and a smooth slab - a tremendous pitch!

Two lesser pitches led to sunshine, food and drink and an evening with Irish climbers in Hunter's Bar and presumably another lock-in.

#### The Ramp E1, 5b - County Clare

Lisdoonvarna is slightly hard to believe. Stuck in the middle of The Burren - an indescribably beautiful wasteland - it has a vitality and insolence that can only stem from the Middle Earth itself. (I think he means it's a nice spot. - Ed.) September sees the Crack, an excuse for every pub and hotel to stay open 24 hours a day for a month. The ultimate lock-in.

I had a route to do, but in Ireland, there was no hurry. We left the hostel and found a meadow of herb covered limestone pavement to relax on, make brews and enjoy life.

Later, we located the crags and, of course, the tide was ebbing. How else could it be? Ambled down to Mirror Wall, aptly named, and leaped across greasy boulders to it's foot. The Ramp, a skinny thing, the only fault in an otherwise featureless wall of grey stone, soared above. It would be a ramp were it not so narrow.

Reaching it, over a dripping bulge, proved problematical and once established, it revealed itself reluctantly, a delicate ballet dance on the edge of balance.

Much higher, the ramp became a flake, but the footholds vanished, and a wildly exhilarating hand traverse led on to a tiny perch in the middle of nowhere. I tied on to three rusty pegs and Jan and Dave followed, in their own delightful styles.

I traversed on and up in to glorious sunshine, tied off the ropes and ran round to take photos. Jan sang quietly to herself as she climbed and we all revelled in the hot sun, basking with the satisfaction gained from climbing such a beautiful route.

Dave and I did another climb - an excellent HVS corner - but it was as nothing in comparison, so we retreated to the Ballynilacken Castle Hotel for a couple of pints of black gold on the lawns. Then a romp around the castle itself, like naughty children we sneaked up onto the barred off battlements.

We returned to the beach and cooked a meal in the evening silence as the sun sank in a golden display over the Aran Islands. The glorious twilight faded, as we ate to the seductive susurrus of the surf at the end of a perfect day.

#### Main Mast E2, 5b/c - County Donegal

I once wrote about a dream sequence on my perfect route - "A cirque of silky smooth slab, soaring upward in the hazy distance, to form a wall in such a cool, unconcerned way that the transition from incline to vertical is barely discernable".

We walked across the moorland to look at Sail Rock and there it was, the sweep of slab shooting out of sight below us to the sea, split cleanly up it's centre by a flattering crackline. My disinterest turned to desire and we sorted out the gear. It didn't take long - I took everything.

The approach, down a crumbling, gravel arete was hairy scary, but the slab, as it crept out of hiding, became even more tantalizing. The previously unseen nether regions swept into a bowl of clean rock like a bottomless teacup. The sea surged into the base of the cup through the arched remnants of it's far side.

We traversed the slab beneath a wall of overhanging debris and gingerly hunted for a ledge or belay somewhere near the base of the crack. Neither was forthcoming so, while Dave looked forlornly at the inevitable tumble in to the sea, I set off up the rapidly steepening slab hoping for runners.

Seventy feet up, on stiffening limbs and dirty holds, there still weren't any. I swept off a few slopers and scrabbled on to muddy ledges that should've been the belay. One loose wire wasn't enough, so I carried on, past an old peg, on to much harder, but cleaner rock.

The gear got worse, the slab steepened, and a hold broke. Dave sat quietly while I made some tricky moves back to the main crack. Big gear, holds and solid rock led to a foothold in the middle of the sweep of rock. There was just enough rope to belay with. Dave followed, finding the easy looking bits hard, and the hard looking bits hard. Jan waved across the void and took the first of many photos.

Above us, the crack, cleaving a diagonal line through the first bulge, was too wide for hands but too shallow for arms. Attempt seven proved successful, a deep trust in the frictional qualities of the rock being crucial.

The crack soared on, steadily, at 5a and 5b. Runners plopped in healthily and I padded up the ripples on the face, feeling confident. About 100 feet out, the rock became vertical for 30 feet or so, having no fractures and even the crack thinned to less than finger size. Runners were small but plentiful and a sequence of side-pulls and smears led to a positive hold. As the crack widened, so I climbed faster then fell into a grassy bay at the top with adrenalin surging out of my ears. I belayed with barely enough rope left to thread through the sticht plate.

"Straight in at number one!" I shouted down to Dave and he flexed on his foothold to warm up - Jan, stretched out in the evening sun, shouted across, then returned to her book.

We cooked and ate on the harbour wall at Kilcar sharing another sunset, blissfully happy.

Phil Morris  
(What's he on?)

## 24 HOURS IN THE LIFE OF A PENSIONER.

After spending the morning and afternoon exploring the golden sands, the azure blue waters, so limpid and still yet so mobile; and the savage cliffs of the Kyle of Tongue he could resist the siren call of Ben Loyal no longer; lurking with such sweetness and elegance of form. An elemental spirit of the air, in its graceful sweeps from its many dramatic and rocky summits to the sea that lay so balmily at its feet, soft and shimmering as gossamer.

He parked at the head of Loch Loyal and set off across the crisp moor which quivered under the heat of a June afternoon with only the sounds of the Red Grouse and the thin piping of the Golden Plover to accompany the crunch of his boots on the dust dry peat. He mused that were this particular hill to be situated in the Lake District he would have thousands of people for company but placed as it was on the North Coast of Scotland and not even remotely reaching Munro height he could be sure of a quiet afternoon. Somewhere, some meall gorm would be knee deep in Munro baggers. They were welcome to it. Here was the true Kingdom of Heaven.

Above him the towers, ramparts and keep of Syenite glowered down on him like a medieval fortress; harsh and a little menacing in the afternoon glare. But they gave good sport and soon he was striding the summit crenellations with spacious views all around. Over the lochan dappled moor to Ben Stumanadh and Ben Klibreck, and across to the mighty bulk of Ben Hope riding stiffly at anchor athwart the huge sea loch of Eriboll and the Pentland Firth; as restless as the island stream seascape to which its huge northern prow so firmly directs the gaze.

He found the summit occupied. Real pensioners these, not your pale imitation scrounging types but your actual genuine article. The gentleman was 78 and could only manage a serious day out every other day. His lady was somewhat younger. They were a complete delight and it was with much regret that he eventually left them to explore the many other rocky summits along the ridge. The penultimate top showed a tremendous rock slab plummeting dizzily down into a silver loch which looked truly superb both from the loch and from the final, much lower,



top. He wondered how many times the human spiders had ascended these hostile slabs, exuding their nylon ropes behind them. Not often, he was sure about that.

With the sun beginning to dip in the west he re-traversed most of the hill, no hardship in these surroundings, and dropped to the far peninsula of Loch Loyal. The dappled brown shore line and the delight of deciduous trees beautifully complemented the electric blue of the water and made a truly memorable walk back through what can sometimes seem as fairly bleak scene. This particular evening the light and the shape and form came together in one glorious whole, lifting the spirit and the soul.

After a quick tucker-up he decided to drive across the Kyle of Tongue and round to Loch Eriboll. The Kyle was a ribbon of fire as he dropped down through the woods to the Causeway. Here and there the flames were interspersed with streaks of ochre as the sandbars began to show through the ebbing tide, like the bones of some primeval monster drowning in its own blood. Looking back, Ben Loyal was handsomely lit, its pleated form insulated against the surrounding moor, truly the Queen of Scottish mountains.

It was quite late in the evening before he reached Loch Eriboll, where everything lay calm and still. The rolling fields, the crags, and the ridge opposite were but dark shapes in the oily smooth water. At the head of the Loch the stiff and serried ridges of Fionaven guarded the horizon with a distant savagery. At his feet the large spit of land with its lime kiln glowed in the final beams of light. He marvelled that such a scene could be at once so tranquil and benign, and exude such breathless beauty, and at the same time be so wild and savage. Wide, deep and very lon, Loch Eriboll always commands a presence. Even in the half light of twilight as the light drained away the colours, if anything, intensified. Black and charcoal, deepest indigo, and, on the water, mauve and violet. Occasionally, thin silver bars stole across the loch where the gentlest of zephyrs and the surface caressed with all the tenderness of lovers confident in their deep and abiding affection. This feeling was intensified by the soft cooing of the eider ducks, unseen but ever present. Thus did sleep overcome him.

The early morning found the Loch mirror calm with the surrounding mountains etched in coloured glass like a massive gothic window, radiant with saturated hues. The distant crags of Foinaven sharply delineated by the morning light as they were, seemed less fearsome now somehow as their serried ranks blocked off the head of the loch. Near at hand every rock and every pebble shone its beam of light at him from the surface of the Loch. He drank deeply of its ambience before moving off to Strath Hope.

As he drove alongside Loch Hope he could see that its surface was already being broken up behind him and it became a race against time to park the car somewhere and dash the two hundred yards or so to the lochside to photograph Ben Hope reflected in its Loch before the morning breeze folded up the magic tapestry for the day. God stayed his hand and he had several entrancing minutes by the lochside before the image shimmered, broke up into oval portions, and was finally laid to rest by the breeze.

He drove on to Dun Dornaigil, the remains of a Pictish Broch, parked, and had breakfast. Who were these people who had built these defensive structures and when? and who were the enemy? Nobody seemed to know for sure but it was obvious from the poignant remains that bore mute witness to a more violent age that it was not designed to stand a long seige.

Ben Hope rose up before him in two massive sweeps, one above the other. He chose the longer route of ascent following a series of dramatic waterfalls but was soon on the top. He had plenty of time for reflection as he strolled quietly alone along a ridge above a series of gullies seaming the northern precipices; oblivious of the other groups now arriving on the summit by the shortest and easiest route. The last time he had been here was for two days in a murderous storm, looking for a young lad missing after setting off to climb the hill. They had found him half way down one of the gullies having been blown off the top from where he now stood. In the softness of a June morning it seemed barely possible that such a thing could have happened. But he knew from his own experience how the moods of these hills could change suddenly and violently. He remembered too sitting with one of the young girls of the rescue team as the sorrow of the tragedy welled out of her.

With all the afternoon in front of him there remained a simple stroll off the hill and an afternoon lazing by the sun drenched river to look forward to. A major weather front had passed over in the morning, the first for a month and he knew that following a dash up Ben Klibreek early next morning it would probably be raining by lunch time and would be time to be thinking of going home.

Dave Earle

(I think Dave must be on the same stuff as Morris!)

### The Coast to Coast Walk, April 1992

The more painful memories of last year's Cleveland Way (four days, very hot, huge blisters) had receded far enough for Liz Rawcliffe to agree to join Pete Hope on Wainwright's Coast to Coast. We planned to take twelve days for the 192 or so miles and booked a series of B&Bs at strategic points, including Freda Bostock at Osmotherley and Liz Stevenson at Gribdale. (All the B&Bs were good, some outstanding, and we'd be pleased to give details to anyone interested.)

Steph ferried us up to St. Bees for the start, and Monday 13th April saw us rounding the Head in a bracing North-westerly with increasing showers. Eventually we headed east and, after crossing some lesser-known bits of Western Lakeland, arrived at Beckfoot in Ennerdale. This was a brilliant B&B which, in the next morning's torrential rain, we were reluctant to leave. Above Black Sail the entire fellside was one gigantic "beck" and the noise was deafening. The rest of the Lakeland traverse gave us a full cross-section of English weather possibilities: snow, wind, cloud, hail, rain, sleet, sun. Views were fabulous, if occasional!

After crossing the M6, a lot of rather muddy trudging eventually brought us to Kirkby Stephen, where the elegant B&B was occupied entirely by no-longer-young coast-to-coasters. Stooping, stiffening forms struggled creakingly up and down the impressive staircase, comparing aches, pains and blisters, longing for their turn to luxuriate in the enormous bath in the equally enormous bathroom.

Almost halfway now, and the Pennine watershed was crossed on Nine Standards Rigg - not that we noticed in the cloud, rain and wind, we were more in it than crossing it! But things began to brighten as we went the length of Swaledale with all the rabbits and primroses (and sheep and lambs!). Richmond on Bank Holiday Monday was a bit of a shock - people, cars, chips - but solitude was soon regained. (Not surprising, really, as the route at this stage kept close company with a sewage works.)

The flat section between Richmond and the Cleveland Hills edge of the Yorkshire Moors involves a fair bit of road walking, but at least the weather was kinder and it was more interesting than expected. (The one pub was open.) Sadly, though, what should have been a beautiful, lofty route along the scarp of the Cleveland Hills was again lost in rain and mist. Incidentally, the path hereabouts is shared with the Lyke Wake Walk, the Cleveland Way, the White Rose Way, etc., and is fairly eroded, but overall reports about terminal erosion on the C to C are much exaggerated; there are still areas with no discernible path. (Liz will say because we weren't on it...)

The last B&B, a farm in Glaisdale, fed us superb home-reared beef and set us up for the final long slog to Robin Hoods Bay. Both weather and terrain were mixed and interesting, but at least we hit the coast in sunshine and walked on into the sea, as befits, to be met by Steph with a bottle of champagne, as also befits. There followed a pleasant pint in the Bay Hotel with friends made along the way. (For the first couple of days beer consumption worked out at an encouraging 35 mpg, but lack of opportunity reduced this to an overall figure of 76.8mpg...)

Neither of us had any blisters or rubs on the feet - Liz did the entire walk in her Walsh fell-running shoes and became fluent at the sales patter en route! All in all, it was a great trip - wonderful to be walking for twelve days at a go. It was quite difficult to adapt to a more static existence again. Thanks AW, thanks Liz.

Pete Hope

#### FMC PROMOTIONS

##### 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 it 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.

#### FMC T SHIRTS

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 Front design only - 1 med. & 1 lge. Black, 1 xlge. Blue £6.50 each  
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The BMC are offering all affiliated club members an annual subscription deal of £21 for twelve copies of their magazine.

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#### A NEW CLIMBING WALL

is to be opened in the Newfield Sports Centre at Edisford Bridge, Clitheroe in time for the Autumn/Winter season. The wall is being built by DR Walls and will be 5.5m high on four sides of the indoor tower. For more details contact The Manager, Diane Hollingworth on 0200-442188.

#### A NEW SHOP

has been opened by Stuart Gascoine dealing in mountain biking, running and climbing equipment. He promises 10% discount to FMC members.

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#### LOST

One Glencoe Map loaned out on the Lagangarbh Meet.  
Please return to Dave Earle, 31 Chester Avenue, Poulton FY6 7RZ.