

Fylde Mountaineering Club Adventures...and more

Autumn 2023

Wildlife in underwear

Torrential rain

Potty training

Extreme snoring (no surprise there then!) (ed)

Busted collar bone





Summer so far has certainly been mixed.

Cold temperatures in April, better in May, a heat wave in June and then torrential rain in July which played havoc with outdoor plans.

Despite this it looks like there has been plenty going on with a few trips in the UK and abroad, weekend meets, subterranean goings on and evening climbing when the weather allows (more volunteers for evening walks please). Please keep an eye on the syllabus as there's plenty more going on this Autumn.

There has been notable progress at the huts with both showers and toilets just about complete, plus broadband installed and working at Little Langdale.

Thanks to the new members who have injected enthusiasm and let's hope we can enjoy the remaining part of the year with more of us attending meets and the huts.

Tony

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We have had a mixed summer this year as Tony has said, and I can't believe how hot it was early on-glorious, but then high summer was rain! Although this must have curtailed some of your activities, you have still managed to enjoy the great outdoors.

There has been a couple of members who sustained injuries but these thankfully appear better now. It just shows-you can't be too careful.

We had a change for the wild swim this year and ventured to Rydal Water-a lovely Lake, and as usual we had a great time! It seems the weather for the Hut to Hut was poor but this didn't put some hardy souls off. I am glad to see the caving crew are still active-not my thing but great for those who are keen.

The FMC Challenge is on again this year but we have yet to see who has taken it up! The evening walks have been thin on the ground and I don't think we had one day walk which is a shame-we need more volunteers.

I have enjoyed the Pub meets-so nice to meet your friends in different pubs with some great real ale!

Anyway, I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the magazine, and thanks to all who contributed.

Christine

To Boldly Go

With Andy Dunhill and Rob Lewis

Part One - Deepest Deepdale.

20th May '23

I was in discussion with Andy Dunhill about a day's climbing on the weekend. During the course of this discussion, it became clear that Andy's project was to boldly go where no Dunhill has ever gone before. Apparently, he had a list of over a hundred and thirty Lake District crags which he had never visited.

I suggested Erne Nest Slabs in Deepdale and resultantly we met up and took a car to Bridgend on a



Andy at the top of Erne Nest Crags

Wild Lakeland-looking across to Sleet Cove from Erne Nest Crags



floor. There was nothing for it but to keep going up four hundred metres of steep hillside. I took to counting paces between prominent boulders to relieve the tedium. Al Davis suggests in the guide that the walk in takes an hour. It took super fit Andy half as long again and me somewhat longer. I wonder if Al Davis was carrying a sack of gear or just a camera when he went up to the crags?

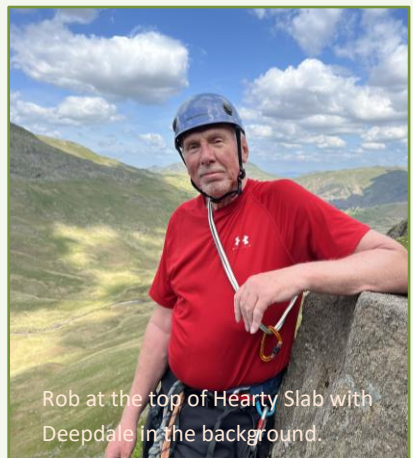


Ernie nest slabs

Andy starting up Hearty Slab

Having arrived and geared up, Andy set off up **Hearty Slab VS 4c**. He was so keen to get going that he had climbed to the first runner before I managed to get him on belay. The climb takes a slight crack and a series of shallow grooves with some thin

glorious morning on the twentieth of May. The climbing guide describes Deepdale as a long valley and there is a fair walk on the level before the real difficulties start. Mart Crag looked attractive in the sunshine, and not too far, but Andy had identified our destination as a series of crags scattered across the hillside on the left, facing the end of the valley, and a long way from the valley



Rob at the top of Hearty Slab with Deepdale in the background.

moves lower down, but it eases and becomes more amiable as height is gained. A worthwhile route.

Following this, we moved across to the next route on the right, **Ahab's Slab**, also graded **VS 4c**. Andy wasn't saying a lot on this route so was clearly having to concentrate more than on the last one. The guidebook suggests that the difficulties ease as height is gained. I certainly didn't find that to be the case; this was a particularly sustained pitch with numerous technical difficulties. I was glad to have seconded it; it was certainly a grade harder than the last climb we had done, even though the two routes were supposedly of the same standard. We wondered when the crag had last been checked. Andy and I both thought **HVS 5a** would have been a more accurate grade for this route. The crag had clearly not been visited for some while and Andy's nut key came in useful for digging out potential runners.

To conclude our day's climbing we chose Moby Dick, a Severe on the same left-hand slabs. The routes further right did not look as clean or as inviting. Moby Dick - probably named due to the whaleback

appearance of the rock- was a pleasant route, obviously at an easier standard than the other two.



The guidebook describes it as 'pleasant padding' which is what it is. Andy took the most interesting route to the top where I was advised to avoid a loose boulder and to trundle it if I could. This I did, and we were entertained by the boulder crashing down into the empty valley.

We didn't see a soul all day. A holiday weekend in the middle of the Lakes and complete emptiness and isolation amidst the grandest scenery.

Just a marvellous day out.

Rob

Heatwave in the Hills

Ladies June meet 2023

Angela Lovett

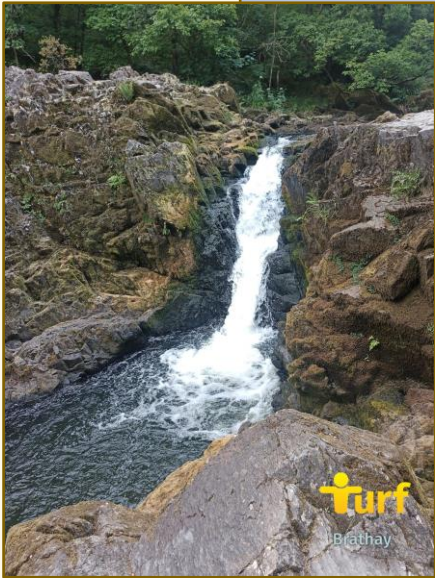
Those sweltering-Pat Bennett, Liz Stephenson, Liz Rawcliffe, Frances Watkins, Rosie Todd (guest) Angela Lovett. Andy Dunhill was also at the hut.


StickleTarn

Ladies gathered at Little Langdale in the June heatwave, with some pausing en route for a dip in Loughrigg Tarn. Numbers were depleted by various ailments, but a convivial evening was enjoyed. Saturday saw an epic ascent of Holme Fell, followed by more swimming in Rob's hole, with another party making the circuit via Colwith Force, Skelwith Bridge and Elterwater, complete with vital rehydration at the Britannia. The evening back at the hut was enlivened by one of the swimmers discovering wildlife in her underwear. We all enjoyed catching up on the news, and reminiscing.

We scattered on Sunday. Some made their way home, others tackled Silver How (for Turfing) or Wetherlam, despite the heat. It was another happy occasion, with great friendship on offer.

Angela





Ropes, harnesses and helmets , but not for
the open air...this is the

CAVING SEASON 2022

With Steve Clark

Not so much a 'season' as we've been caving all year round recently. FMC Caving for 2022 started on 3rd January in a damp and sweaty Inglesport cave with Glenn, Al B & Steve looking for a

wet weather option. Aqua hole was suggested but the 40m free-hanging pitch seemed a bit optimistic, so we went to Sell Gill Holes above Horton. Glenn wanted the rigging practice but had forgotten how to

Steve Wrigley posing on Sunset Hole Main Pitch

tie any knots with two bights. Steve could tie knots but had never rigged anything at all. 3 pitches of the dry route were safely rigged, quietly overseen by Al.

The following Tuesday evening we headed to **Sunset Hole** for a first outing with the camera gear. Glenn rigging with a 15m rope we'd packed for a 20m traverse. Steve W, Al B & Steve C. Important lessons in (not) climbing with a Peli case in each hand were learnt, but the photos came out well and subsequently won the FMC Photo contest Action category.

style trip on the northern flank of Kingsdale. Entrance obstacle of the 250m 'Long crawl', followed by a series of pitches and cascades dropping into **Kingsdale Master Cave** and out of **Valley Entrance** right by the car!

We finished **January** off with a trip to **Hardrawkin Pot** on Ingleborough. Steve W & C, Rich McG, Glenn & Al B. Twisty, wet & crawling stream-way to the main pitch. Then a shorter, final pitch down to a deep and dark sump. Alan 'Spaghetti' Blackburn entertained with a tangle of bags at

the deviation, leaving it disconnected and the pitch rope right in the waterfall for Glenn to follow. Hood up! Rich & Steve C made their way back to the car via a **Middle Washfold** to **Great Douk**

through trip. Welcoming pint in The Station at Ribbleshead.



Glenn ascending Sunset Main Pitch

Then it was a **Swinsto Hole** evening trip, with a team of 7. Donnie's first SRT trip. Pull-through / canyoning

February 2022 started with a trip to

Dale Barn 3 -

a long cave right through the fell from Chapel-le-Dale to Kingsdale, originally explored by cave diving. Now accessible through a dug shaft of **Illusion Pot** on fixed railway ladders.

Team of 6 including guest

appearances from Ali Eley & Nick Hepburn. The entrance series leads to a mucky duck/sump. Fortunately, a team from an outdoor centre had got there half an hour earlier and had lowered the water (mud)

level in the sump to create some

airspace. Impressive cavern in the **Expressway**, although we realised afterwards that we'd taken a wrong turn and missed out on at least half the cave. Strong **Mug attempt** leaving the pot over the fell. Dark, fog, fences and no compass.

FMC **February** Social with Frank Pearson gave an



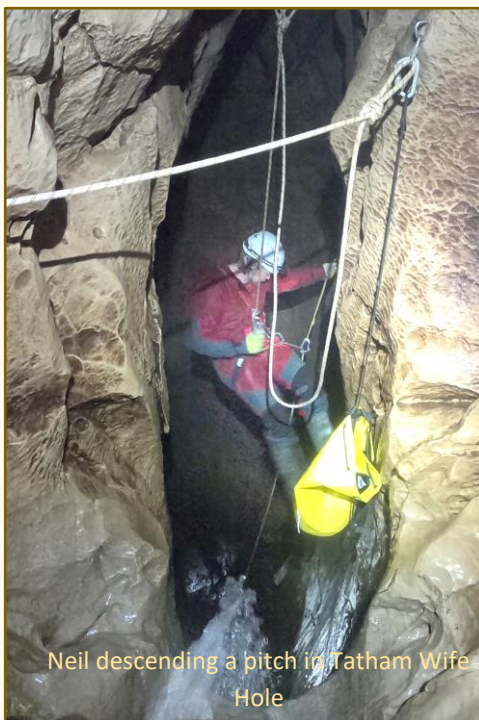
Expressway tunnel, Dale Barn 3



Nick, Al B, Steve W, Ali Eley & Rich McGuiness, Dale Barn 3

insight into their extensive digging activities on Leck Fell. Steve C & W followed this up with a scouting trip on a wet evening to the Notts 2 field. We visited **Voldermort Hole, Excellent Pot, Shep Pot & Perilous Pot**. Stopped in all by the passage size and large amounts of water. We failed to find **Pinnociho or F'ing Hopeless Hole** but realised afterwards we were following the wrong wall.

A period of dry weather towards the end of **February**, opened an opportunity for a trip to the superb **Tatham Wife hole**. Steve C, Neil & Steve W made the steep ascent up the fell from the old Ingleton Quarry workings near White Scar, and across the limestone shoulder to the pot. A small opening in an ominous gritstone funnel-shaped catchment. Really not a place to be in a rainstorm. The pot, however, was excellent. The usual volume of water has left the whole place spotlessly clean with not a hint of mud. Multiple steep cascades, wet pitches and crawling along a 'hading' (45 deg fault) rift, lead to a sporting descent of **The Ramp** – a low rift scramble down a waterfall. One of the best trips of the year, well worth the hike to the entrance.

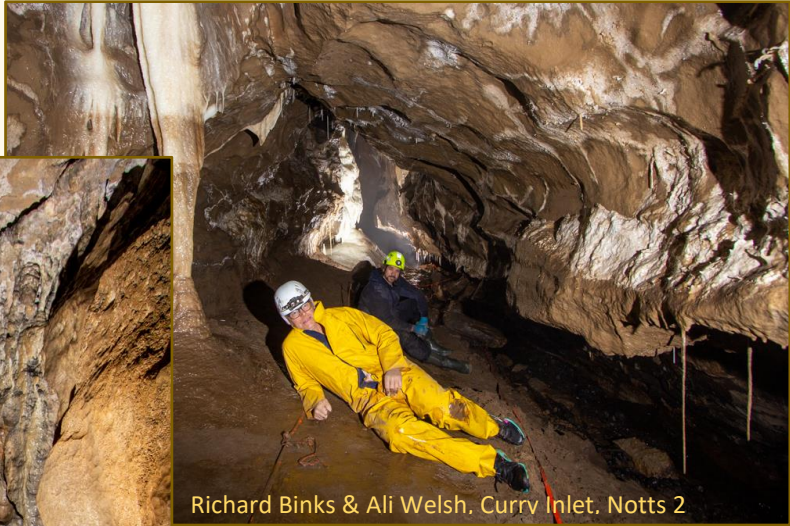


Neil descending a pitch in Tatham Wife Hole

In **March** we had an evening trip to **Notts 2** with guest appearances from Kirsty & Kieron. Martin B documented the proceedings with his £3 charity shop camera and Al B showed his usual patience in a prolonged climb up the entrance shaft.

April saw a series of trips with Steve C teaching himself to rig increasingly awkward things, with Donnie carrying the bags and posing for photos. **Short Drop to Gavel Traverse, Jingling Pot Lateral Cleft** and the short but technical traverse over the **Yordas Chapter House**

Waterfall were dispatched on consecutive weekends.



Richard Binks & Ali Welsh, Curry Inlet, Notts 2

the first of many FMC outings for Dan Ellis, introduced by Ali Welsh. Ali was intending to go for run, but realised we had a spare suit and he couldn't resist the **Committee Pot** shaft climb in his fell shoes.



Donnie, Chapter House Yordas

May saw a return to **Notts 2**, with guest appearance from Richard Binks, Landlord of the Silverdale Hotel. Also,



Donnie, Centipede Pitch, Lost Johns

Evening trip to **Lost Johns'** as an SRT refresher for Rich McGuinness. New roof traverse and descent of **Hammer, Mud & Centipede** pitches. Steve C rigging & Donnie posing for photos.



Rich McGuinness, Mud Pitch, Lost Johns'

Donnie & Steve C returned to **Lost Johns'** in **June** to rig the **Catherdral-Dome** route. Rope bags for six pitches, plus a couple of camera boxes didn't really work with two people so the camera was promptly abandoned. Disaster struck on the awkward climb down to the head of Dome pitch when Donnie dropped his tobacco pouch down a narrow but seemingly bottomless hole in the floor! About 5ft down on a ledge, it was just out

of reach. Fortunately, bolts just above allowed us to rig a counterbalance and lower Donnie down the hole head first to retrieve it. Relieved, fantastic rigging followed just below on **Dome** pitch. This

drops out of a bottomless rift in the roof of a 25m high aven, followed by a swing over to fix a bolt deviation, and then a further swing into a

'doorway' in the wall, some 10m above the floor. This provides access to a cross passage that continues to a junction with the centipede route.

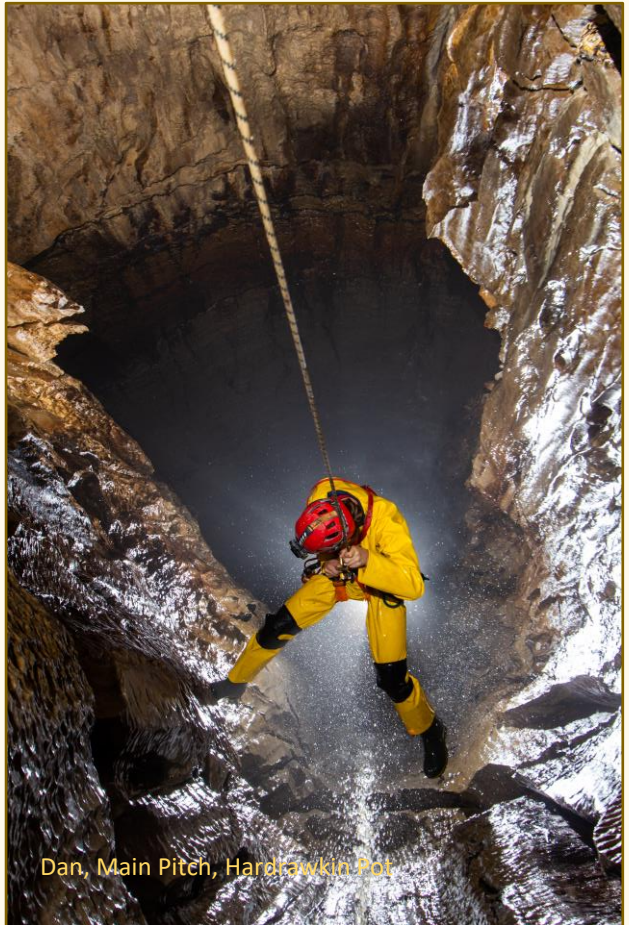
July was absolutely roasting, 27-30deg in the evenings, too hot to go cragging so we opted to take advantage of the cooler temperatures underground back at **Lost Johns'** for an exchange trip. Steve C & Donnie re-rigged **Dome** route and Dan & Steve W rigged

Hammer, Mud, Centipede.

Reunited at **Dome Junction** we swapped over and de-rigged the other team's pitches. Out in under 2 hours to a sunset with a cooler box of St Austell Proper Job.

The following week Craig joined us for his first FMC caving trip. Pretty warm again for a walk over Casterton Fell to **County Pot**. Ladder on the entrance pitch, four of us headed to **Battle of Britain Chamber**. Dan & Donnie took the **Manchester Bypass**, whilst Craig & Steve C took the **Trident** route to **Eureka Junction** and through the **Sluice** to meet up at **Stop Pot**. We had agreed a 45min turn-around time, but it all went a bit wrong and we ended up missing each other with a long wait approaching out call-out time. No chance of the pub.

A Saturday in **August** saw Dan & Steve C heading to **Hardrawkin Pot** with 2 bags of rope and 1 bag of camera gear. With hindsight, this was a mistake. We'd forgotten quite



Dan, Main Pitch, Hardrawkin Pot

how much crawling there was before the main pitch. It was worth it for the photos, despite the destruction of one flashgun and the loss of its batteries.

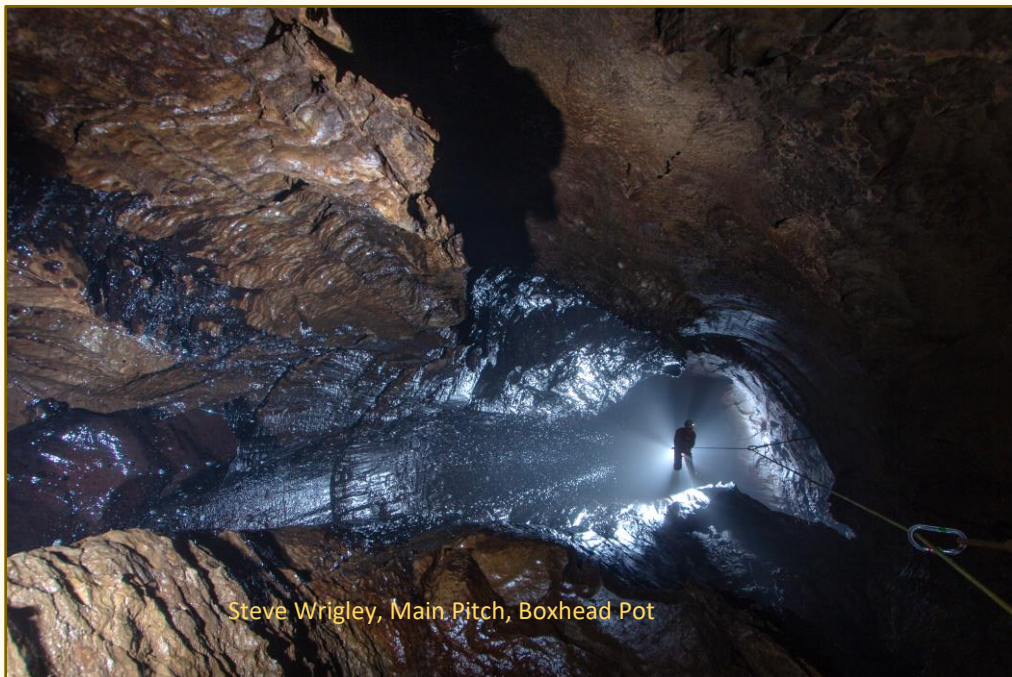
The summer heat wave returned at the end of the month and we found ourselves shirtless, walking up to **Alum Pot** on a clear night. We split into two teams, Dan & Steve W rigging ahead and dropping down

the main pot. We cobbled together some SRT gear for Craig and made our way down to the bridge via **Dolly Tubs**. Weird atmospheric conditions meant we could hear the train across the valley, over flights by some Eurofighter Typhoons and 4G mobile reception down the **Pot**. Wriggers & Dan checked the **Cheese Press** for size on the way out.

In **September**, Dan, Neil & Steve C did the classic **Lancaster – County Pot** through trip. Abseiling into **Lancaster hole**, we left it rigged and made our way through the high level route. **Fall Pot**, **Stake Pot** to

Oxbow Corner. A bit of route finding to locate the step down into the **Minarets** and then a speedy traverse on the left hand side of the big caverns to the **Stop Pot ladder**. Out through **Eureka Junction** to the **Trident pitch** which currently has an in-situ rope, and on through **County Pot** to exit on the fixed rope on the **Entrance Pitch**. (This is currently in place whilst **Wretched Rabbit** is closed due to a landslide). We returned to **Bull Pot farm** via **Lancaster Hole** to de-rig the entrance rope.

A drizzly **September** evening saw



Steve Wrigley, Main Pitch, Boxhead Pot

Dan & Steve C going to **Bull Pot** of the **Witches**. Conveniently located next to **Bull Pot farm**, that was its only redeeming feature. Generally awkward and short pitches, combined with no idea of where were we going left us wanting. A stupidly early callout time had us rushing to de-rig, followed by another change in the rain.

Highlight for **November** was a trip to **Boxhead Pot**. Steve C had been earlier in the year and was keen to go back with the camera. Found quickly in the fog with watch GPS, we dropped the first pitch – about 40m straight under the narrow entrance pipe. Landing on a slope of scree, this leads immediately to the 75m main pitch. Steve W rigged this, swinging around in an awesome space, gaining the adjacent '**Kendal Flyover**' rift. Donnie & Dan followed to the bottom of the pot.

Also in **November**, Dan and Steve W did trips to **Sell Gill** in high water and **Yordas**. Al B joined them for a trip down **Gavel** to the sump.

In **December** Craig joined us fresh from his CNCC SRT Improver course on an evening trip to **Sunset Hole** on Ingleborough. Donnie did the

rigging, with Dan's guidance. Undeterred, Steve C, Dan & Craig followed this just after Christmas with an SRT trip to Lost Johns' Dome route including **Candle & Shistol** pitches to the start of **Battleaxe**.

Dan & Steve W did some weekday trips to **Hurnel Moss Pot**, **Vesper Pot** & **Long Drop**. The **Vesper** trip to the bottom was a bit of an epic effort in an afternoon, with them almost missing their 8pm call-out with seconds to spare.

FMC run regular caving trips over the winter months, trips of all different kinds to suit conditions and the abilities of whoever wants to come along on the night. We now have some club over-suits to hire for a small charge for anyone who wants to try caving. Contact Steve Clark or Dan Ellis to get involved.



To Boldly Go

Part Two-Beyond Shoulthwaite

7th June '23

Wednesday the seventh of June was a very hot day.

Andy and I set off through Shoulthwaite farm with its campsite revealing a sprawling collection of motor homes and caravans, with the odd denizens of the same sprawling in the sun. The farmyard itself was deserted. We carried on along the track beyond the farm through high gates and deer fences, and followed a forestry road uphill, zigzagging in the manner of Alpine passes. The

most spectacular view was that of Iron Crag, seen just across the valley from our path although nobody was on it. Andy said he had done a few routes up there.

Eventually we came to a sharp zigzag where the crag was supposedly adjacent to the road a hundred metres further on. Sure enough, there was a rock just off the road after a hundred metres but it was overgrown and not at all inviting. We wondered if this outcrop had

Andy works his way up the crux of Sipling Rivalry

returned to nature. Andy went for a look and declared the rock to be unclimbable in its present state. Leaving me with the sacks he went for a look further up the track. It turned out that the guidebook writer should have said three hundred metres from the zigzag, not one. I picked up the sacks and made my way upwards as Andy came back to help.



Andy starting the first crux of Sippling Rivalry

Sure enough, there was Sippling Crag, right at the roadside and ready to be climbed. We were intending to climb **Sippling Rivalry VS 5a***, we hoped the route was as good as the pun, and soon Andy was on his way up this. It was a steep start and then the first crux was reached, an overlap requiring a committing and



Andy completing the Headwall of Sippling Rivalry

rather off balance step up and left. Moves up the wall were followed by a difficult step to the left where the headwall involved fingery pockets before a jug could be reached. Andy



Andy abseiling down the line of the route at Sippling Crag

had no difficulty with any of this and was soon securely belayed to a tree at the top of the route. I can only say that I suffered greatly on the headwall and was grateful for a tight rope at one stage.

We both thought that Sippling Rivalry was a good route and worthy of its star, but it really should have been graded HVS. Andy had a quick look at the harder routes on the crag but they were quite dirty and he'd left his brush in the car. We had ticked the crag and left it at that.



Rob topping out after struggling up the head of Sippling Rivalry

Rob



On Friday 4th August the funeral of Dorothy Jowett took place. She was a founder member of the FMC and an obituary will be in the next issue.

This picture was taken in the Alps sometime in the late 1950's early 1960's.

Brian Wilkinson (1936 -2023)

As remembered by Chris Thistlethwaite

Although Brian Wilkinson 'Wilks' hadn't been an FMC member for many years, he was one of the 'old guard' amongst the likes of Frank Lord, Gordon Heywood, Alan Bell etc to name but a few. There were certainly a number of elder past and present FMC members at his funeral on 9 June this year.

I first met Brian about 1973 when I frequented the Thatched House in Poulton-le Fylde with my pals and he with his, amongst whom was Frank Lord, and it is through those two that my interest in the mountains developed. Indeed, it was they who took me under their wings and introduced me to the FMC and just for that alone I shall be forever grateful.

Before I joined the FMC I, along with my wife, spent many weekends in the Lake District and Scotland with either Brian or Frank, and we became good friends. I had just started teaching at Warbreck High School in Blackpool and Brian was head of PE at Bispham Technical College. I had also just started climbing and there was a climbing wall, one of the very early ones at the college which Brian invited me to use. I used to take a small group of pupils there after school and Brian provided ropes and harnesses etc. I'm sure that amongst those pupils was Al Peel and Andy Blaylock.

When Brian realized that I was also a keen runner I needed little persuasion in joining him for regular fell runs and we entered many races together. In those days, even though Brian was sixteen years older than me, I struggled to keep up with him. He was certainly very fit and dedicated to this sport. He even had a weight training facility outside his office at the College which he used every day in order to maximize his running fitness. I remember the longest fell run I ever did, about 35 miles. It was on the day of the Yorkshire Three Peaks race and Brian had been asked to provide refreshment for Dougie Brown, who was racing, on the summit of Whernside. We did not participate in the race itself but we did take in all three summits, along with a number of Settle to Carlisle Railway ventilation shafts which he had an interest in seeing. I can tell you that he finished the run far stronger than I certainly did. He took part in many races including a number of marathons. Whether he paid his entry fees or not is another question but that



was Brian. The exit music at his funeral was 'Keep on running' by the Spencer Davies Group. Most fitting.

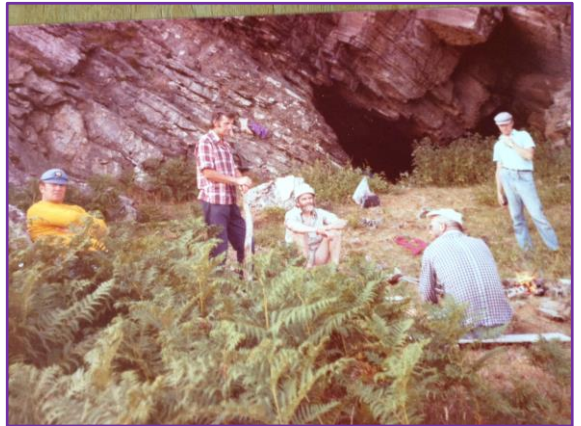
I can't comment on his earlier FMC days as that was before my time but there are a few members still with us who probably could ie Peter Roscoe, Dougie Brown, Derek Smith. Apparently his party piece was doing a handstand on the top of Napes Needle.

He certainly was a character and his passing, for some of us marks the end of an era.

R.I.P.



Brian, a friend and Doug.



Brian, Derrick Smith, Brian's brother Derek, Frank Lord and Doug Brown.



Fred Wilson, Brian and Derek.

Photos from Chris and Doug Brown



Chris

Our Early days.....1951

FORWORD.

The Fylde Mountaineering Club is now one year old. For me in particular it has been a very happy year but all who have been able to enter into the Club's varied activities have gained something; new friends, a wider interest and memories of happy days in the hills. Memories of sunny days on Gimmer, tussles with the wet rock of Bowfell, the dark splendour of Gaping Ghyll, the silent run of skis or the "get-together" in the huts after a hard day's climb - all these and many more have a place in our mental picture book.

Starting the year with only a few leaders and a large proportion of learners, the standard of climbing has improved. Many of our beginners have now passed the novice stage and I am happy to record that we have had no mishaps. It must always be the prime motive of the Club to maintain this standard, each climber bearing in mind that a good climber is a safe one and should always have a margin of safety.

Some of our members, now in other parts of the country are unable to attend the Meets but we do not wish to lose contact with them and we wish each one the best of fortune in their new surroundings. In spite of this, our numbers are increasing and we have welcomed many new members. No special qualifications are required in order to join our Club except an enthusiasm in mountaineering so we are attempting the difficult task of training new members in the art of climbing, increasing their field of activities and creating a Club spirit. That this exists among us is evidenced in many ways; by the help given by the more experienced to the others, by the ungrudging work done in maintaining the huts in decent order, by those who sit for hours on the top of ladders they never descend and by those who work in so many ways to keep the Club alive. Thanks are due to these, to a hard working committee, to the founders and to the Holiday Fellowship for their co-operation and help given in allowing us to use their huts.

Finally - good climbing to all members and Many Happy returns to the F.M.C.

JACK JOWETT

Chairman.

THE FMC MISERABLE SCOTTISH WINTER TRIP



Up above School House Ridge

Each Feb / March we head up to Scotland for adventures – Ullapool, Ft Augustus, Ft William.

Winter climbing, mountain walking and recently also some rock climbing in unseasonably warm weather.

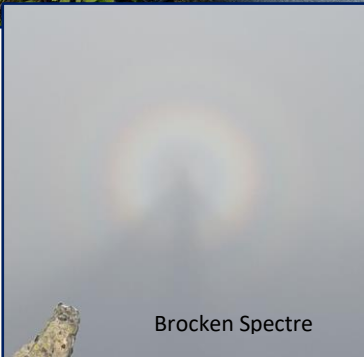
This year we rented the Rucksack Club hut on the coast near Ballachulish. An ok place – if “un peut scruffy” and cold. But – ‘tis what it is. Grumpy, Matt, Peter W, Rich McGuinness & I were there all week, with comings and goings by Grumpy’s top pal Jim, Wriggers/Nick, Nobby/John H and Mark, Chris B, Andy H & Al B coming up for the final long weekend.

There wasn’t a lot of hard-core winter about – but it was cold with some snow about
AND NO RAIN!

So, what did we get up to? (I can’t resist a grid!)

Sunday	Callendar Sport Crag – Wriggers + Steve	Decathlon + Mark’s “Shagging History” Braehead – Graham and Simon	
Monday	Comb Buttress Ben Nevis - Wriggers + Nick	Curved Ridge solo scramble – Graham, Matt, Jim, Simon	
Tuesday	Lost Valley – Bidean – Wriggers and Rich	Aonach Eagach – Graham, Jim, Peter	School House Ridge and tops – Matt, Simon
Wednesday	School House Ridge and tops – Wriggers and Rich	Sea cliff outcrops nr Arisaig – Graham, Matt, Simon, Nobby, John, Nick	Ben Vorlich - Mark
Thursday		Glen Nevis cragging - Arisaig – Graham, Matt, Simon	Glen Etive, Ben Starav and Beinn Aighenan – Mark
Friday		“Up some pointy thing” – Graham, Rich (Garbh Bheinn)	Lost Valley to Stob Coire Sgreamhach – Mark, Chris, Andy, Al, Peter

Saturday	Lost Valley to Stob Coire Sgreamhach – Al B Blke Ride - peter	Lost Valley – Bidean – Graham, Matt	Glen Creran, Ben Sgulaire - Mark, Chris, Andy, Rich
Sunday	Oban – Hut - Andy		Beinn Fhionnlaidh – Mark, Chris, Al





Ben Sgulaird



Peter with 2 fine mountaineers



The final few metres of Curved Ridge



Rich not breaking a sweat

Beside this, these sorts of things went on...

- Wrigley pretty much killed Nick by exhaustion – Ft William Abattoir was considered as a humane option.
- Aonach Eagach: Peter “Jim led us down a very steep corrie descent towards Loch Achtriochtan but we managed to miss the correct route. Graham recommended Jim as a contender for Nob of the year award.”
- Aonach Eagach: Peter “A great day out on the mountains with two fine mountaineers.”
As a result of this severely deluded thinking, Peter has subsequently been detained under Section 12 of the Mental Health Act, and is in an undisclosed secure facility.
- Alan B lost his camera in the Lost Valley – then found it the next day.
- We had some extreme snoring in the chilly dormitories.
- Glen Nevis was closed for a Bollywood film – we saw a tank, a load of cold actors being soldiers and “James Bond” type quadbike.
- Liz made us a lovely dinner
- Wriggers got a nasty bacterial infection in his elbow after a scrape on a crag.
- I bust my collar bone in the world most pathetic fall from a slow-moving bicycle.

All in all we had a great week and did LOTS. Many thanks to Mark for coordinating the attendees. Great attendance – goodness even got Nobby Dale up north in winter 😊.



Simon



To Boldly Go

Part 3 Buckbarrow - Lower Crag and Long Crag

8th June '23

Buckbarrow isn't really an obscure crag but all the buttresses are listed separately and Andy hadn't climbed on some of them before, so they were on his list of crags to do. I'd never climbed on this crag at all.

Resultantly, on eighth June I drove out through the scenic delights of

Frizington and Cleator Moor to reach Wasdale. It was another very hot day.

We decided to start with a route on Lower Crag which involved an awkward loose approach through bracken and gorse.

Cassation Direct HVS 5a gets a star

and is described as the best route on the buttress. A wall is followed steeply to a sloping ramp with some awkward holds which always seem to face the wrong way. A shallow groove is climbed into a corner but then the route breaks steeply left before easing. Andy dealt with this pitch methodically and with some ease, but I found the steep top wall with its small holds trying. After several attempts I found a small incut hold in the right corner which was the key to further upwards progress for me. This was a good route, high in the grade and well worth its star.

'insecure slopers'

We moved across from the top of this crag to Long Buttress where Andy had selected **Un-Named Groove**, also with one star. My old guide had this listed as **HVS+ 5a**. Andy's new guide lists the route as **VS 5a**. This is a steep route which climbs a large shallow corner under overhangs until forced out right. It is



a thrilling ascent with positive holds until they run out at the top of the corner. Here you are left with insecure slopers to grasp and not much of anything at all. Andy led this and told me about where in the corner the 'fun' would start. I had several goes at climbing the top moves and failed. The guidebook points to an easier **VS 4c** alternative by taking the arete on the left to bypass the difficulties which is what I did. This route was much harder than the HVS we had

climbed previously and it could only be a guidebook error to suggest it was VS. How again could it be VS if it had an easier VS variation? Andy thought it was potentially E1 the way he went.

Having done a route on each buttress we called it a day, made our way down steeply through the bracken and walked along the road back to the car to start the long drive home.

Rob

(Not) The Scrambling Meet

24th & 25th June 2023

With Andy Dunhill and Christine Barbier

Maybe it was the forecast but no one booked in for the Meet except Christine & I & we didn't intend to scramble. It

rained overnight on Friday & was damp in the morning but improved so we decided to try Lickel Crag, an outlying venue in

the new Duddon guide. It's situated on the lower slopes of Caw Fell, one of the many smaller hills south of Coniston Old Man. It's an area I've not explored before & is well worth a

visit as there's lots of walking & mountain biking options, which does miss the worst of the mountain weather.



It's only a 20 minute walk through Longtail Wood. The crag was a little damp but climbable. I did A Lickel Adventure VS** which was very pleasant & had an abseil descent. The crag is

definitely worth a visit if the weather is a bit doubtful or for a short day.

Bracken fighting

We then drove round to the south Duddon Valley by which time the sun had come out & it was hot! I decided to explore three small crags on the west slopes of Great Stickle Fell. These are also in the new guide & definitely deserve an obscure tag. The main problem was the bracken which was bigger than me but I persevered. Fox Crag was the first where I soloed Pitted Slab HS & Layback Crack HS. This is a small open crag worth a visit in Spring or autumn when the bracken is not so aggressive.

Next was Ribcage Crag where I soloed Spare Rib given HVS but was only VS. It wasn't very good & the other two climbs didn't look much better. It's a steep rocky approach with a large bird's nest, maybe a Peregrine? The third was Yew Barrow Crag where I soloed Brownlow's Crack VD. There's a steep wall with some decent looking climbs but it's all

shadowed by a large tree which will keep it damp & attract the midges.

The forecast for Sunday was wet & it wasn't wrong! We decided to explore the National Trust Sandscale Haws National Nature Reserve a short distance north west of Barrow on the Duddon Estuary. This is an outstanding dune habitat supporting a range of wildlife including the Natterjack Toad. The sands are so extensive we could barely see the sea at low tide. We walked along the beach for 2 or 3 miles to the point where we could look across to Walney Island. On the way we saw lots of Jelly Fish presumably waiting for the tide to come in. There were excellent views north towards the Lakeland Fells where it was clearly raining hard. We returned as the rain started so we scrambled back to the car.

Andy

Deteriorating weather on the Hut-to-Hut walk



Those soaked-Tony Hulme, Andy Chambers and Matt Hulme

As remembered by
Tony Hulme

Tony and Matt on the way to Esk Hause

After reading John Wisemans account of a Hut to Hut walk he did a few years ago, I felt inspired to follow in his footsteps (or at least some of them), and after completing the National 3 Peaks with my sons Dan and Matt in early June we felt in good shape.

Matt joined Andy Chambers and myself on this one, Dan squirmed his way out of it probably knowing what was to come.

Andy had done this walk with Neil a year ago so it wasn't just my fault we got lost.

Saturday 14th July arrived and so did the torrential rain.

Potty training

Fully kitted out with waterproofs we set off from Little Langdale at around 7am, Matt decided he didn't need waterproof trousers so after all day in the rain he started walking in a similar fashion to when he was a toddler and hadn't got past potty training (I'm sure they'll be on his Christmas list).

The track past Slater's bridge took us eventually to the junction on Wrynose pass where we turned uphill on the road, and a right turn at the 3 shires stone gave way to the fells and led past Red Tarn onto the Crinkles. The weather deteriorated with visibility down to 20 yards and

the rocks were quite greasy. We decided it would be wise to avoid the bad step and traverse around the fell until we rejoined the path towards Bowfell.

Following a faint descending path for a few hundred yards the cloud briefly lifted to reveal Little Narrow Cove directly ahead rather than 3 tarns and Bowfell behind. Oops, we had gone due west instead of due North, which meant a rising trudge across sodden ground until we eventually found the right path.

The visibility had gone by the summit of Bowfell but a brief window appeared revealing our next summit Esk Pike. Not wanting to make the same mistake again I took a bearing just before the cloud blanketed the scene again. Esk Pike ticked, then came the long descent to sty head via Esk Hause, with cloud lifting in time for the odd photo and revealing Great Gable our next objective, looming in the distance, almost grinning at us.



On all fours

The Breast route from Sty Head for me was probably the hardest and most energy sapping part of the whole day, almost relentless and the descent down from the summit of Great Gable to windy gap was slippery and needed care. Windy gap living up to its name forced progress on all fours to the top of Green Gable.

The slow and gentle descent via Brandreth helped our pace to recover knowing the most steep and technical ground was behind. As we descended to the summit of Honister Pass I checked my Garmin watch and discovered we had only travelled 13 Miles so far (in fact

only 6 miles from the Summit of Bowfell).

From this viewpoint the path to Dale Head Tarn looked steep but fortunately the foreshortened view gave a false impression, the ascent being slow but reasonably easy.

Crossing the stream flowing out of the tarn required care but once across we were on our way to High spy, Maiden Moor and in no time to Stair hut. Either we were walking very slowly or the path had stretched as it just kept going on and on over false summits. It felt like Catbells had been moved further North as its unique shape just wasn't coming into view. Andy was trying to convince Matt that the hill ahead was the last one before the descent to Stair (a sentence he repeated several times).

Finally Catbells came into view and the fell race descent route lead us wearily to the hut. We arrived at 7.30pm being reminded by our wives we were booked into the pub for a meal at 8.00pm. Handed dry clothes whilst being assisted in the removal of wet ones at a lightning pace made me consider "Is this the shape of things to come".

Despite the weather it was certainly a grand and memorable adventure, I'd highly recommend it and thanks to John for inspiring us.

Tony

FMC Annual Dinner

2nd December 2023

I know what you're thinking, Summer's barely over and we're talking about the dinner.

Well, plans have to be made, we have the venue sorted it's the Coledale again.

Last year's dinner was excellent, great food and company. We also added a couple of presentations which will continue (biggest personal achievement and biggest contribution to the club) along with the age-old Mug of the Year award.

Please put the date in your calendar but also we would like your nominations for this year's awards as listed above.

Thanks.

Tony

Now For a

Tite and Lock Lancaster Station
July '23

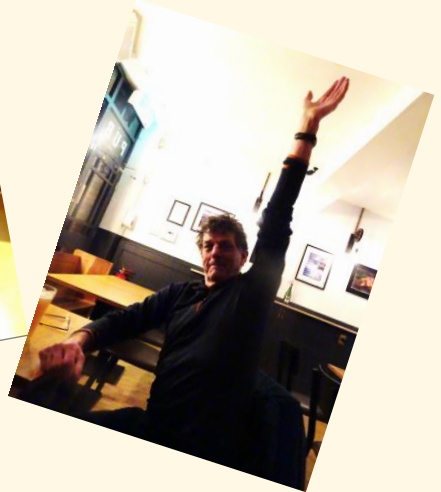


CHRISTMAS POULTON '18



Gottle O' Geer

Winckley St Ale House Preston March '23



PLEASE SIR COULD I HAVE
SOME MORE BEER



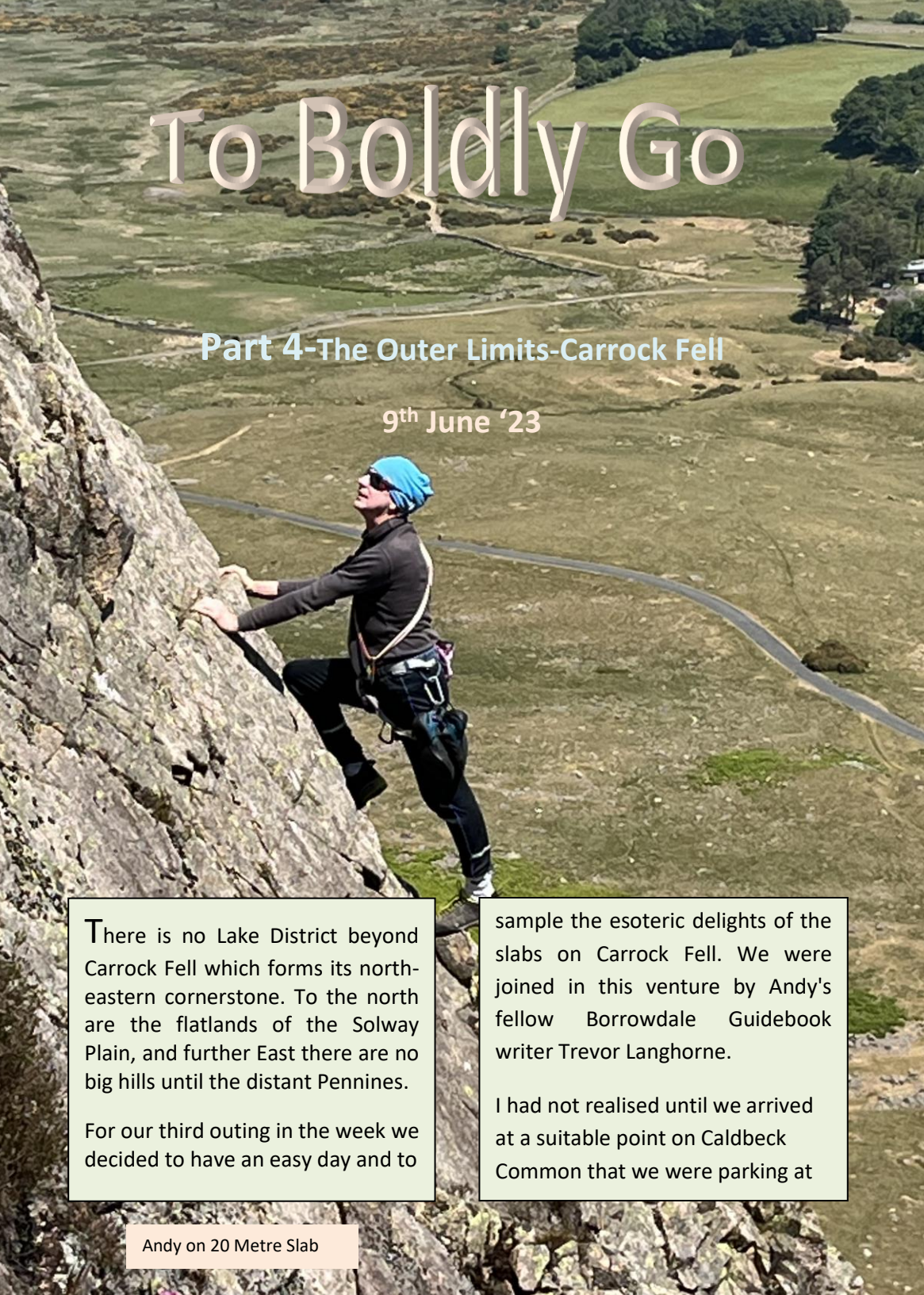
The Craft House
Lytham March '20

CHEERS

To Boldly Go

Part 4-The Outer Limits-Carrock Fell

9th June '23



There is no Lake District beyond Carrock Fell which forms its north-eastern cornerstone. To the north are the flatlands of the Solway Plain, and further East there are no big hills until the distant Pennines.

For our third outing in the week we decided to have an easy day and to

sample the esoteric delights of the slabs on Carrock Fell. We were joined in this venture by Andy's fellow Borrowdale Guidebook writer Trevor Langhorne.

I had not realised until we arrived at a suitable point on Caldbeck Common that we were parking at

the beginning of a now popular track up Carrock Fell - the tentative line suggested in the *Wainwright Guide* was now a clearly marked route to the summit. This was fortunate for us as we took this track before contouring across to the base of the Eighty Foot Slab, graded **Very Difficult**. Trevor wanted to lead this and Andy and I followed, but not before Andy had soloed **Smearing on Sunshine MVS** which takes a shallow groove just left of the easier

route. We all thought that **Eighty Foot Slab** was well worth the one star it is given in the guide, but due to some awkward moves and lack of protection should probably have been **MS**. Andy then had a top rope on **Happy Feet HVS 5c**, a direct start to **Smearing on Sunshine**. He has always had good feet and had no trouble with this. Trevor and I were content to watch.



Trevor Langhorne leading 80 ft Slab

Then followed an awkward traverse of the fell to the rather unimaginative variation on a theme, **Twenty Metre Slab**, also graded **Very Difficult**. This it wasn't, and for much of its length was only just a **Diff.**, being a succession of large easy holds and much easier than the **Eighty Foot Slab**.

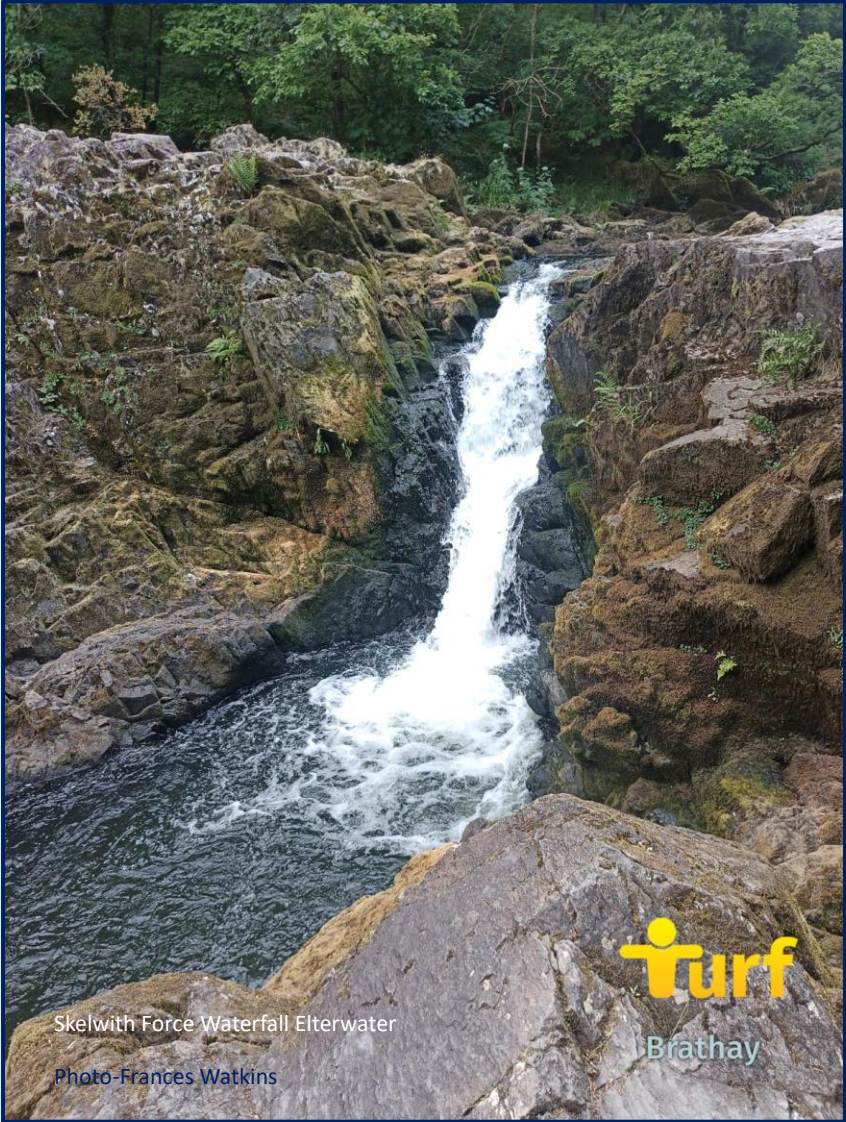
Having made our way back to our gear, we all concluded the day by soloing **Eighty Foot Slab Left Hand**, given **VD** in the guide. This was on immaculate rock but again, barely **Diff.** in standard.

This was intended to be a short day and we were all content with the routes we had ascended. Andy had ticked off a few more of his never visited crags.



Andy on 80 ft Slab

Rob



Skelwith Force Waterfall Elterwater

Photo-Frances Watkins

turf
Brathay

Fylde Mountaineering Club

is affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council

www.fyldemc.org

