

Fylde Mountaineering Club Adventures...and more

Spring 2024

Monsoon weather

Rope lessons

Lots and lots of SUN

Beer at School

Scuppered by the Snow





Happy New Year to you all.

Hoping everyone is looking forward to this year's activities with the club, I certainly am.

Since my last message the weather seems to have remained dreary, but it'll be a welcome change to see some spring sun.

There have been a few changes to the syllabus for this year, notably the fell race will run from Little Langdale in May.

The Annual Dinner will return to the Fylde this year, being held at the De Vere hotel near Stanley Park Blackpool.

The huts have pretty much been upgraded so it'll be great to see members using them and look forward to seeing you on the Craggs and Hills.

Tony

Contents

4 DINNER DELIGHTS

Annual Dinner

6 WET AND WINDY

Ladies Christmas meet

8 DOROTHY JOWETT

Doug Remembering

11 UNUSUAL WEATHER

Sunny Scotland

17 ROY TURNER

A tribute from John

21 A GRAND WEEKEND

Chester hut meet

24 MEETS ON OR OFF

Evening climbing meets

28 DAVE WESTBY

Remembered by Rob

31 SUPERB VIEWS

Walking Ennerdale



Hi all,

Well, what a wet Winter we have had with rain a lot of the time! Still, we are into Spring now and the weather is warming up thank goodness. I am looking forward to getting out and about more as I am sure you are. Some of the meets we had last year though were really sunny as you will read, and it was a treat- so lovely to feel the sun on you.

There are articles on trips away, evening meets and a walk remembered amongst others, and I am sure you will enjoy reading about them. Some sadness too though.

I must say I was a bit disappointed this time as without John's old walk article and the Obituaries we wouldn't have had a magazine! Please, if you can write about your adventures and send them to me and then we can be sure we have a magazine next time. As always, thanks to those who take the time to write the articles.

Christine



Roads full of snow on the Annual Dinner weekend 2023

Report by Tony Hulme



The dinner for 2023 was very similar to the previous year being at the same venue (Coledale Inn) with pretty much the same excellent and abundant food. Most members opted for 2 courses as opposed to the belly busting 3 courses the year before.

The weather also played a part in dumping large amounts of snow, creating a barrier from Kendal to Shap. This caused chaos for

members coming up to the dinner on the day.

4 managed to get through whilst 2 members had to turn back.

Back at the Coledale the evening continued with the presentations.

Biggest contribution to the club was awarded to both hut custodians



after their excellent work in bringing both the huts into the 21st century.

It was good to get together with some folks we haven't seen for a good while (if for no other, a great reason to attend the dinner).



This year's dinner will return to the Fylde, taking place at the De Vere hotel near

Stanley Park, with a slightly less formal than usual buffet menu. All awards etc will

Personal Achievement went to Karen Hicks, and most fells summited on the revival challenge was won by Jen Chambers.



Peter Wilson retained the fell race trophy, and mug of the year was taken by Craig Hargreaves for irregular rope work.

still take place, so please put your

nominations forward and we'll make this year's dinner one to remember.



Tony



swimming with rain on the ladies Christmas meet 2023



With Christine Fry

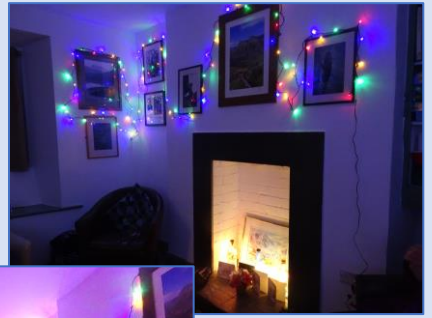


Getting wet were Angela Lovett, Mary Aspin, Liz Rawcliffe, Liz Stephenson, Frances Watkins, Pat Bennet, Christine Fry, Sue Denmark and Steph Hope.

but had decided to try Langdale for a change. We decided not to go to the pub that night, so we settled in with drinks and had a catchup till eventually the jigsaw came out.

Saturday dawned with the arrival of Steph. There was no change in the weather which was dismal again. As Steph loves wild swimming though she decided she would have a swim in 'Rob's hole' which is part of the river Brathay at Slaters Bridge. Mary, Angela, and the two Liz's decided to observe this mad woman swimming in the river on a cold rainy day! Steph thoroughly enjoyed it of course and felt exhilarated after. Mary, Angela and Liz R decided to have a walk onto Tilberthwaite then.

The weather forecast wasn't good for the Christmas meet and it wasn't wrong! Friday evening came with low cloud and drizzle as all but Steph arrived at Little Langdale. We usually meet at Stair at Christmas



Frances and Pat decided the weather wasn't going to put them off too much and walked a circular route to Skwelwith Bridge and back-both looking like drowned rats on their return! I hadn't been well before I came and still wasn't feeling on top form, so stayed in and caught up with some reading-very frustrating though.

The weather deteriorated later in the afternoon with lots of rain and wind, so we battened down the hatches and chilled or had a go at the jigsaw which was proving to be a tough one.

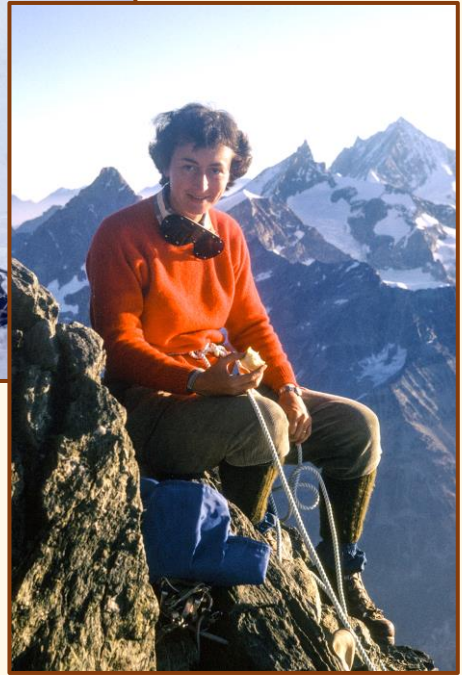
It was then time to prepare the food for the Christmas dinner and what a feast we had-so much lovely food! We were stuffed! It was a lovely evening and we just sat, relaxed and enjoyed it.

Sunday we all decided to go home, but Steph had organised to meet up with some friends at Wray Castle where she had another dip-her friends joining her!



Christine

DOROTHY JOWETT



As remembered by Doug Brown

It is sad to note the passing of Dorothy who was (I think!) the last surviving founder member of the club. It is a very long time since, as Miss Dorothy Shaw she attended the meeting in August 1950 at the Old Grammar School on Raikes Parade in Blackpool, when a small group of enthusiasts met in response to an advertisement in the Evening Gazette, to form the Fylde Mountaineering Club. This event is recorded in the excellent Journal of the FMC 1950-1990 edited by Dave Earle. Never one to mince his words the editor recorded that Miss Shaw was soon "snapped up" by Jack Jowett. They were married within the year. However, I suspect it may have been a mutual "snapping up" as Dorothy always struck me as someone who knew what she wanted out of life, and Jack just happened to find his way onto the list.

I was still at school at this point and did not join the club until I came out of the army in 1958 after completing my National Service. One visit to the cottage at Little Langdale at the invitation of Billy

Haywood and Carolyn Ivins was enough to convince me of what I intended to do with my spare time. The whole building was throbbing with enthusiasm. Dorothy and Jack had one of the cottages next door. I quickly became aware that Dorothy, who was now producing a family, was an experienced mountaineer. She was one of those determined women who could match men at what a lot of people thought of as essentially male activities. I was aware then that she had climbed in the Alps which, as a young man, really impressed me. It did not become known to me until much later in life that she had climbed the Matterhorn.

Dorothy was an attractive woman who was not afraid to speak her mind, but she was also sensitive and kind. I personally recall how kind she was to me after I was involved in a bad climbing accident in 1959. She also had a good sense of fun. We all recall (well my age group do!) the hilarious evenings spent at the house on Queens Walk preparing J.J.Productions for the annual farce or pantomime, performed every year at the Club Dinner. I would recommend everyone to read Dave Earle's take on these events, so well documented in the previously mentioned Club Journal. Suffice to say the rehearsals were hilarious from beginning to end and on the night, at the dinner, no one ever remembered their lines correctly. There always seemed to be vestal virgins turning up and a great demand by the men to play female parts. Looking back, I often wonder how Dorothy tolerated the antics of the participants at the rehearsals, but she saw the funny side of it all and just occasionally shook her head in disbelief.

As their family grew Jack and Dorothy faced the usual problem that arrives with children, and that is, how do you keep up the activities you love. They seemed to manage this by sharing most things, but also by alternating their away days to ensure that they both managed to get out on the hills.

I remember Jack describing how he trained himself and Dorothy in crevasse rescue. His technique was to throw a rope over the access bar on one of the old gas street lights on Queens Walk, and hang from this on prussic loops. The idea being that he was simulating being in a crevasse and working his way out of it alternating the loops, into which he placed his feet as he scaled the lamppost. This

all went well until one evening a policeman on his beat noted his activities and demanded an explanation. "I'm practising crevasse rescue ". It must have sounded the best excuse ever! I don't know whether he convinced Dorothy to try his system. I suspect she may have had more sense.

Dorothy and Jack also spent time climbing together in the Dolomites. They were both very fond of Italy. This probably arose from Jack's wartime service in Italy in the RAF. I recall always the generous nature of Dorothy combined with a slight schoolteacher strictness, which occasionally showed through particularly when she felt someone had overstepped the mark in some respect. Although appearing sensitive on the outside she was no shrinking violet and commanded a good deal of respect from all who came into contact with her. Dorothy would, I am sure, like to be remembered as a good and active climber, a loyal member of the Fylde Mountaineering Club and a mother of children of whom she was exceptionally proud. She and Jack remain for me the people I most admired as a young man. Thank you Dorothy for all your kind words, guidance, and for the good life that you lived.

DOUG BROWN



Lots of sun on the North East Scotland trip...really?

As a relatively new member and, having previously taken advantage of FMC club trips, I was keen to organise a road trip to the Northeast of Scotland (my old stomping ground). It was a Campervan trip and the Hick's, Martin Dale, Captain Paul Reid and my pal, Guest/Guide Jim Woodley made up the numbers.

Early considerations on that type of trip were typical worries when planning a trip to Scotland; consistent rain, midges, quality of the pubs (Martin's main concern), cold winds, the harr (east coast fog) and bolshy birds. So early warnings were made to prepare for the worst Scotland can throw at you.

This wasn't going to be a typical Scottish road trip....

As told by Graham
(Grumpy) Callander

Logie Head: The Captain on Bladder Wrack (S)

Day 1: Kirriemuir

As we convened on the Sunday afternoon, omens weren't great. It was cold, wet and midges weren't far away. Things did not look good. The chosen venue, Kirrie Hill, is unusual in Scotland in that it is a large sports crag, developed for the purpose. Traditions of "trad" run deep in the area, but things have changed. Through the afternoon it cleared and eventually a good number of 5's and 6's were ascended. In the evening we nipped by to say hi to Bon Scott's statue. The town isn't known for its pubs or fast food so we headed off to a good site some way away at Blackwater Reservoir. Idyllic.



Kirrie Hill: looking damp, with a bored child looking on.

Scottish crown jewels

Day 2: Arbroath Sea Cliffs

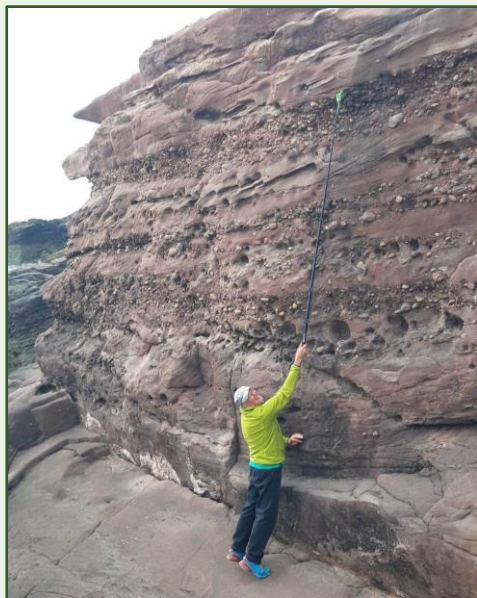
Then it was off to Arbroath, of "the Smokie" fame, for a gander at the extensive sports sea crags. All the routes are short, mainly difficult and on unfriendly conglomerate rock. The highlight of the afternoon was watching the pod of dolphins heading up the coast, we saw them most days.

Routes were climbed, all rather short, all very similar.



Kirriemuir: Grumpy, Paul, Bon and Martin, one of these is a statue!!

After high jacking an ice cream van, leaving Arbroath was no hardship. It was a lovely evening heading to Stonehaven with a short stop to admire Dunnottar Castle, where the Scottish Crown Jewels had been hidden from Cromwell. We managed to bag great parking spots next to the harbour in "Stoney". The pub, the Chippie and the views were top class. Both Martin and Paul resisted the fried Mars bars on offer, don't know why?

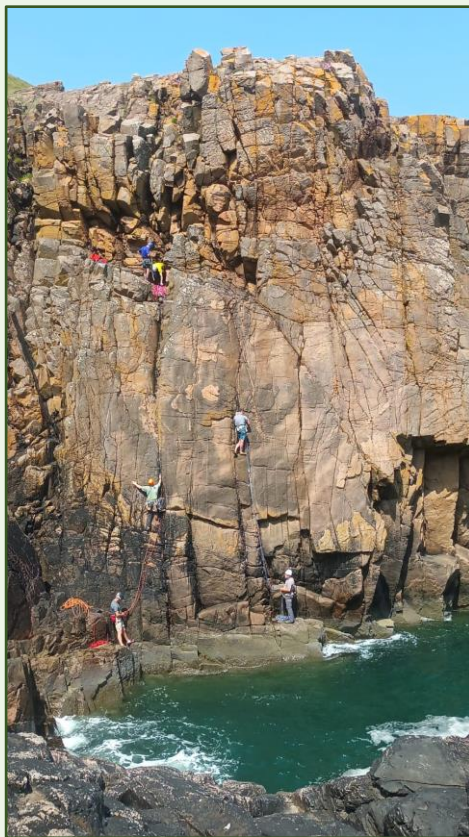


Arbroath: Clip Sticking....

Day 3: Clashrodney and Yellow Crag

Again, on waking up, the sun split the sky. We were parked next to some

swanky public loos, with our own dedicated cleaners looking after us. A short drive north found us at Clashrodney to find the tide was just



Clashrodney: Jim and Martin leading Hairline (S) and Stiletto (HS) respectively.

heading out, a shoogly (wobbly) ladder allowed easy access to the fine pink slab. This gives great climbing and Hairline and Stiletto were quickly despatched. Martin also took the sharp end on Birthday Treat (E1 5a), a local

test piece. The Dolphins showed up at the prescribed time, so Karen was happy. The dedicated team then went further south to Yellow Crag at Newtonhill and completed another four sports routes. The beers in the Marine that evening were well earned. Another beautiful day.

Day 4: Cruden Bay and Graymare Slabs

Another brilliant day dawned. What was wrong with the weather? No harr, no chilling north sea wind.....A quiet run up to Cruden Bay was had via the relatively new Aberdeen bypass, a thing of wonder! We arrived at Graymare Slabs and introduced Karen to a bottomless abseil into the base of the Crag. Suffice to say, she wasnae happy but did a great job. Being watched intently by some local lads on electric bikes necessitated taking the bags down to a ledge. The routes were fantastic, low angled and reasonable grades, all allowing for a fine afternoon. Cruden Bay harbour was a treat to stay at.

Graymare Slabs:

Dave, Captain, Grumpy and Martin

Day 5: Fulmar Wall and Meikle Partans

Another cloudless day, after yet another quiet night. At the harbour there was an area for Vans, an honesty box, loos, a water tap and a great view.

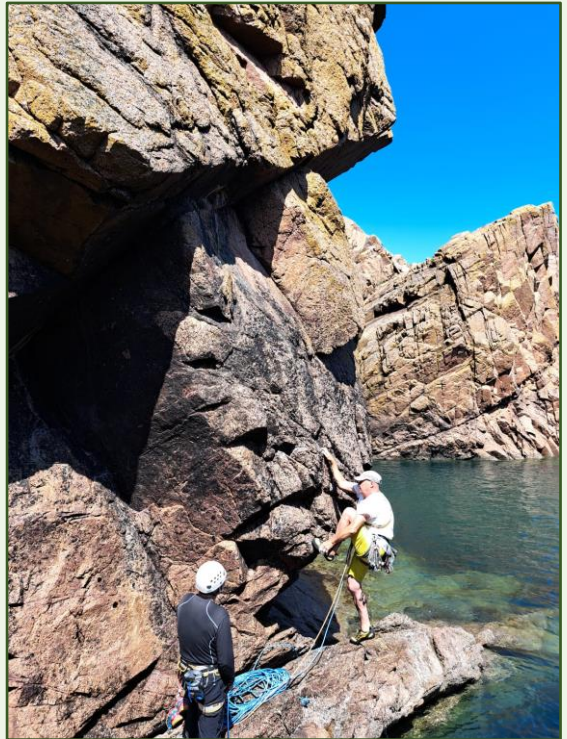


Graymare Slabs Karen abseiling in.....



What more could you ask for? Great Climbing? Well, Fulmar Wall and Meikle Partans didn't disappoint. Karen and Dave had waved us a fond farewell earlier in the day and an intrepid three climbed on to seek out peerless granite. The Weight, Albatross and The Bridge were all climbed in fine style. It is fair to say the local Fulmars watched on with great interest and were given a wide berth. An evening trip to "Spoons" for curry night in "Peterhead" didn't detract from the day.

Fulmar Wall: Martin reaching up to start The Weight (HS)



Cruden Bay: No Vans were damaged during this trip.

Day 6: Up to Logie Head and Port Soy.

Another cloudless day. Go north (again) was the shout as we left for Cullen, it was hot, windless and there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Logie Head is a lovely stroll from Cullen along the beach. It was developed by Guides from Glenmore Lodge to have somewhere to climb, avoiding the Cairngorm gloom. The climbing is on a fin heading out to sea, with half of it tidal and covered in Fulmars, so that area was avoided. The routes are steep with lots of cracks and holds. It's a lovely spot. The old harbour at Port Soy was our planned location for



Fulmar Wall: Grumpy on the Albatross (S)

the evening but was a bit busy so, we drove 500 metres up the coast to avoid the crowds. That's the Northeast for you!!!

The Last Day.

Again, boring I know, in the morning it was warm and cloudless. Port Soy has an Ice Cream parlour that we had to visit. The tides weren't in our favour, so that passed the time. Redhythe Point wasn't easy to find or get to and, a little disappointing when it was located. We

climbed a few routes, but the pub beckoned and, after a great week, it was a fine ending to the trip to sit and admire the medieval harbour and watch the sun retreat.

We'd had the most amazing weather, it had been bone dry and warm. The rock hadn't been sweaty, the seas had been calm, the birds had been quiet and the



Logie Head: Martin cruising Sunny Side Direct (E1 5c)

crag had been deserted. It's a great location to travel to, just make sure you go when the weather is with you. I feel we were lucky.....

Graham

Roy Turner



As remembered by John Bailey

I first met Roy in 1987 in the Queens Hotel, Fleetwood, when pubs usually only sold one bitter and Thwaites Best was the best! It wasn't by any means a chance meeting; it had been arranged by Roy's partner Robert (I know most of you who know Robert refer to him as Bob, but for some reason I have always called him Robert).

My daughter Jennifer (yes Jen Chambers) was a pupil at St. Mary's RC Primary

Hand traverse on Corvus, Raven Crag, Borowdale

School in Fleetwood, and after attending a PTA meeting I discovered just how short of cash they were for the bare necessities needed for teaching. So, two of my friends, brothers Eddie and Frank Towne and myself decided to walk all the peaks over 2,500 feet in the Lake District in one go, to raise money for the school, and we would do this over 10 days at Easter 1988. Some of you may remember Frank as an FMC member?

We were busy planning this in the Queens (where better than a pub) when Robert heard about what we were doing, and without realising it he was about to put in motion the basis of the long-term friendship between Roy and I. Robert said Roy would be interested in what we were doing, and he would introduce us. The meeting went well, and the pints flowed and on that first meeting Roy volunteered to film our mini expedition and support with his photography and presentation skills so we could maximise our fund-raising efforts. Little did we know at that time he had already made numerous corporate and charitable films and presentations and was bloody good at it!

Roy was true to his word and produced a brilliant short film about 25 minutes long. It was great fun working with Roy on The Lakeland Mountain Challenge and he enlightened the three of us as to how films are made. I can't remember how many hours of filming he did, but



FMC meet at Raven Crag Borrowdale

it was quite a lot. He was a perfectionist, and a lot of action takes were done three times; one in front of us as we ascended, one with us passing the camera and one from behind us, as if the walk wasn't hard enough with full packs on, we did a lot of sections three times.... All Roy would say is "trust me it will be worth it when you see the film", and he was right!

I was lucky enough to sit and watch some of the editing of the film which was fascinating, but one special moment was to observe the voice over being recorded. Roy was working on a video for Evans Vanodine, an international cleaning and hygiene products manufacturer and he invited me to the studio to watch the process. Much to my surprise the voice-over artist was none other than Charles Foster who was then the continuity announcer on Granada, as well as an actor, some of you old enough might not recognise the name but I feel sure you would remember his voice.

Now Roy had another talent, writing scripts, and he had prepared an especially difficult one for Charles with lots of awkward chemical names in it, and Charles admitted it was a difficult one, especially as we were doing this about 9 o'clock in the morning and Charles had worked late on the closing of the previous evenings TV viewing! But he was a professional and pulled it off.

You may be able to guess what was about to happen next. Charles did charge handsomely for his services and as he was enjoying a cup of tea, Roy explained what Eddie, Frank and myself had done and why. He then managed to persuade

Charles to stay a little longer and record the voice-over for our short film for charity, and he agreed - Roy of many talents was also a top salesman!

Now Charles had never seen the script for our film before, so he read it once and Roy explained where emphasis etc. was needed and Charles nailed it. He even allowed us to use his name on the credits and wished us luck with any future fundraising. A true gentleman who sadly passed away in February 2023.

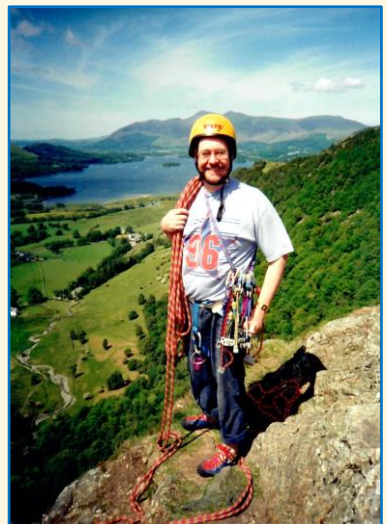
With the film finished Roy also put together a very professional slide show based on the slides we had taken during the walk, which we presented along with the film to a fee-paying audience of about 300 people in St Mary's church hall. We had a huge screen and Roy used several projectors all of which were set behind the screen, it was like being at the movies!

Some of you may remember that Frank and I presented the slide show and the film to the club when we used to meet in the Conservative Club opposite the Thatched House?

And so, our friendship was born, and I have Robert to thank for that.

Roy and I went out into the hills many times together and he taught me to climb, Roy learnt in the late sixties, and he gave me my first harness, a Whillans, but we soon purchased some new equipment and retired his very old rope (very quickly!). On several occasions Roy would prefer to climb in old bendy walking boots.

We liked to be able to climb midweek and watch for sunny weather as we were both self-employed and could have the crag to ourselves, especially because we only ever climbed up to HS and easier climbs tend to be crowded at weekends. We climbed on most crags, but we liked particularly longer routes when we would climb with the sacks on and enjoy a ridge walk afterwards. Roy taught me to appreciate the moment, don't rush it, soak it up and then you



Topping out on Troutdale Pinnacle Black Crag, Borrowdale

can remember it later in life. We also didn't mind repeating climbs that we had already done, Roy said it was about quality and not quantity, so true.

On one occasion on a hot sunny day, we were sharing out the gear for the walk up to the crag and he put his film cool bag in my sack. After we had topped out and were getting the sarnies out before heading back along the ridge. Roy said, "I bet you could murder a cold beer" to which I replied, "oh yes". Roy reached into my sack, took out his film cool bag and then produced a four pack of cold Stella!

I also engaged Roy in a professional manner, and he undertook some product photography, brochure work and copy work for advertising for the heating manufacturer I was working for.

I could go on for pages, but I won't. I just wanted to share with you the sort of person Roy was, kind, considerate, generous, fun, extremely talented and above all a great friend who I will miss very much, and I know Robert will too. Thank you Roy.

John

As most of you will know Roy edited the magazine for a few years, and I think you will agree with me that he did a really good job of it, so thank you Roy.

He also did indeed have a sense of fun and I don't think he would mind me putting these photos in here.



Christine



sunny weather on the Chester MC hut meet 2023

With Tony Hulme

Chester Mountaineering Club's Hut on the Llanberis path part way up Snowdon is a home from home to us. Great walking and climbing are easily within reach.

We've had mixed numbers certainly in recent years, but this time considering July and August's weather wasn't great it was well attended. Saturday brought hot weather so Becky (who came for the walk), Myself, Carol, Simon and Luke went to the Ogwen valley and climbed on the excellent Little Tryfan Slabs.

The routes were easy but a good length and it was nice to practice placing gear again in a chilled environment.

Those enjoying the sunshine-Peter Wilson, John and Claire Hickman, Simon Fenna, Carol Williamson, Martin Dale, Luke Brisco, Christine Fry and Tony and Becky Hulme

Christine and Peter went fell walking from the hut up Moel Eilio which was steeper than they expected.

Claire and John went over to the North Coast with Martin to check out some newish sport routes. Martin wasn't climbing as he had his finger in a splint after breaking it trying to catch a football at a Fleetwood Match, (the event now recorded in Fleetwood Town FCs archives as "The Hand of Nob").

Saturday evening we all met up for a Pint and Pizza just out of Llanberis town.



Tryfan Mountain

(Pint should have been plural).

Sunday dawned and we packed our gear for home but stopped for a swift climb or 2 at Castle Inn quarry.

The weather was boiling, it felt just like climbing in Spain.

As Martin wasn't able to climb, he decided he ought to go on a



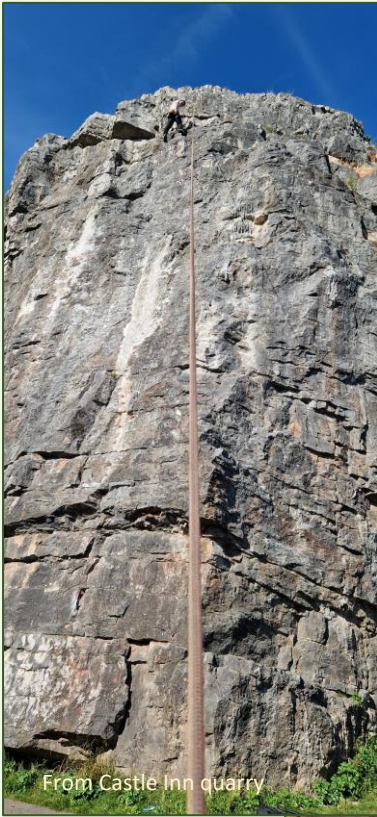
Peter and Christine on the summit of Moel Eilio

walking quest to find the local brewery and sample their delights.

I had been climbing with Luke and as we were packing up to leave realised his trainers had gone missing whilst he was climbing. After a fruitless search I wandered over to where John and Claire were climbing, only to find John had put the shoes in his car saying he thought they



Enjoying a pint and Pizza



From Castle Inn quarry



Peter descending Moel Eilio



Little Tryfan Slabs



Little Tryfan Slabs

were Martin's (or maybe John has a fetish for missing footwear booty).

Anyway, a grand weekend was had by all and here's to many more.

Tony

Monsoon weather stops evening climbing meets 2023

Report by Martin Dale

2023 was a bit of a strange year really with the monsoon arriving early and wiping out all of July's meets!

Not a good start either with the first meet falling foul of the weather! So, no Denham starter. Trowbarrow was the first proper meet and as usual saw a good

attendance. Nothing new for me this year, just old favourites, Coral Sea and Assagai. Craig Hargreaves however had not done Assagai before! Dave was pleased to see us all in The Woodlands after too!

Tick magnet!

The next meet was to Warton Pinnacle crag. This was also well



Grumpy Graham Callander on Lone Tree Groove Warton Pinnacle Crag

attended. We had not been to this particular bit of Warton for some considerable time so it was a welcome change. Grumpy Graham Callander took me up some tough severe's, and a lot of the other members present ended up top roping due to the hard nature of the crag! I wandered off to look for an obscure bouldering wall hidden deep in the bushes. I eventually found it but not without becoming a tick magnet

in the process. I was rewarded with an ascent of Black Magic, f6b+ whatever that means? Felt like good English E2 5c anyway and highball! E3 6a in the guide! We all made it to the Old School Brewery before they shut at 9pm, except Steve Clark's lad who got lost coming down! Employing the latest technology he eventually made it down safe and sound.

Wilton 3 never happened. Too cold I think. A number of members did make Cadshaw though with Paul Reid putting in an appearance after a lengthy absence! Noggarth is always popular and saw a good few teams in action.

New member, Nick Smart turned up and was given a lesson in appropriate rope lengths for the crag by Craig. Thankfully, nobody was harmed in the process! Troy Quarry also proved popular, if a little cool. I actually managed one of my best leads of the season here with an ascent of Dovetail, E1 5c. Not without its moments. I had to jump off on my first attempt just above the ground but was successful on my second go. It was relatively clean

and a good fight! Other stuff done included Pillar Cracks, VS by Craig and Nick Hepburn. Pubs close early in this neck of the woods and we were lucky to get any beer at all on this occasion. Only Martin Bennett's local knowledge helping us out at the last minute.

Fingernail fall

The Wilton One meet at the beginning of June was well attended. I was again accompanied by Grumpy on Cameo. Ryan also did a fine job of seconding this classic of the crag. Grumpy then proceeded to fall off Fingernail, narrowly missing out on a deckout! Simon had arrived with relatively new member Kirsty McCann. We went over and took her up 999. A classic severe. Teams did visit Giggleswick North and stuff was done on Woodcutters Buttress. The next meet to happen was Attermire. Myself and John Hickman met up with ex member and old friend, Paul Clarke. He showed us a couple of recently bolted new routes which we despatched. Nick Smart was again present with his girlfriend. 7 of us ended up in the Talbot in Settle for some good old Yorkshire ale!

Then we had July with all four meets falling foul of the weather! August, usually the wetter month served us better for a change. The Warton Main meet was heaving with lots getting done both on the Terrace and down below in the bowels of the quarry where our



Kelly Morrison on Melting point F5
Warton main Terrace

chairman did Gravy Bones, and Nick Hepburn had fun with Craig on Third World and lost a friend in the process. New members were in attendance too including Kelly Morrison who did a few routes on the terrace. Just shows the popularity of bolts! Next up was Egerton. Craig, Ryan and

that was Trowbarrow again!
Then it was all over and we
were back at the wall. Here's to
2024 and hopefully some well
attended meets! After all, we
appear to have had a windfall of
keen new members!

Martin



John Hickman on Capo, 6b, Frontals
sector, Silverdale sea cliffs

Nick Smart made the effort
and came away with some
routes in the Empty Quarter.
Silverdale sea cliffs was
next – more bolts! By this
time I'd broken my finger
so could take no further part
in proceedings! John
Hickman started with Tony
Hulme on Frontals Buttress,
along with Ryan trying his
hardest on Caudillo.

The only other meet to
survive the weather after



John Hickman on El Regalo, 6a, Frontals
sector, Silverdale sea cliffs

Dave Westby



As remembered by Rob Lewis

Photographs courtesy of Tony Hulme

Dave passed away on 6 March 2024 having suffered from a series of strokes. He had been an FMC member since the 1970s until illness forced him to take no further part in mountaineering, but even after his first stroke he was back at the wall trying to regain coordination, with me at Preston and Iggi at Blackpool. Dave was a very determined climber who didn't give up easily.

I vividly recall the first time I met him which was on the day I joined the F.M.C. He drove up to Little Langdale with that big grin on his face which those who knew him will always remember, and before long Dave, former member Gary Nuttall and I were on our way to Pavey Ark. It was a blue cloudless day and we made the most of it, climbing *Arcturus and Red Groove*, both now E1. Dave showed what a character he was and joked as I completed the second pitch of *Arcturus*, pretending he was belayed to a loose rotten flake. He wasn't of course, in fact, he was a very safe climber. Later, he encouraged Gary as he grappled with the steep start to *Red Groove*. This was another aspect of Dave's character which I liked - he would always encourage you and give you the confidence to succeed. I don't think I would have climbed many of the routes I did without Dave gently pushing me on. 'You're thinking about it too much', he would say, and it would be true and you would just get on and do the pitch. I didn't know at the time that we would form a climbing partnership which would last for more than a quarter of a century.

Dave was a very sociable climber who would always tell you a tale and entertain you. I particularly remember an occasion when we had had a pleasing day in White Gill culminating in Dave's lead of *Man of Straw* (E1). We stopped at the Britannia Inn at Elterwater and sat outside in the sunshine to have a beer. Dave struck up a conversation with a group of walkers. We were still there as the sun went down, having had a most convivial evening after an excellent day's climbing. My family had a static caravan in the woods at Skelwith Fold, which meant we would see Dave's wife Diane and their boys on days when climbing wasn't top of the agenda, so we had plenty of varied social events.



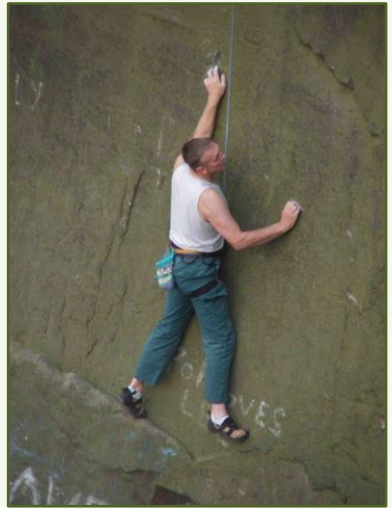
Dave and I were quite prolific in the mid-nineties, and during this time climbed over a hundred routes of quality at HVS / E1 with the occasional foray into E2 mainly in Borrowdale and Langdale. One particularly good day on Castle Rock was when, after warming up on *Zig Zag*, Dave forced his way up *Harlot Face* (E1) then led the top pitch of *North Crag Eliminate* (E1). One of his finest leads was *Gillette Direct* (E2) on the Neckband Crag. I thought he was going to do the easier original route but he went straight on up the steep three star classic. He also led *Deuterus* on Raven Walthwaite - HVS but with no protection at all.

We had to have two attempts at *Kipling Groove* on Gimmer (HVS), as on the first go we were forced to abseil off the stance due to freezing rain. When we did *Gimmer String* (E1) Dave laybacked up the top pitch then disappeared round the corner onto the face. From the belay he told me of the 'thin' moves I would have to make before reaching a jug. I am very tall. As I came round onto the face I reached up and there was the jug.

'This one?' I said.

Dave said some quite unprintable things to me referring to my physique, but he had his usual grin on his face.

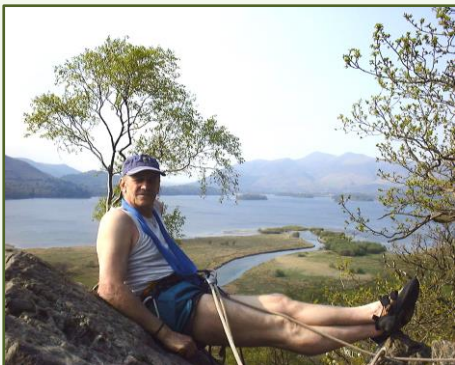
Bleak How was just the crag for us with a profusion of routes at our grades. You could add to that a charge down the hillside on a hot day and immersion in Black Moss pot. Whilst on this crag one day we met a climber called Tony Hulme. Dave encouraged him to join the F.M.C. The rest is history. Dave and Tony climbed together on many occasions.



The last outdoor meet I remember Dave taking part in with the F.M.C. was on Lining Crag in 2002. We were not staying at the hut and had made an early start, so had the crag to ourselves as we saw a large group of climbers making their way up the valley. The club members arrived; I remember Martin was climbing with Mick Tolley. My most notable recollection is that in the midst of a very pleasurable and sociable meet, Dave led the unusual *City of Love and Ashes* (E1) which had a number of sharp edges on it.

Dave remained a member for some years more and I recall him being with me at the A.G.M. in 2011 when I was elected Secretary. Soon afterwards he ceased to be a member as his health was in decline.

Dave was an enthusiastic middle-grade climber and a kind person who would do anything for you. He was a good friend whose last years were increasingly affected



by ill health, surprisingly so considering how fit he always was. I shall miss him a great deal.

Rob

superb views and a fell race on the Ennerdale Horseshoe

**Remembered by John Wiseman
from a long time ago!**

“To follow the watershed of a valley without deviation provides a particular fascination for the hill walker. Nowhere is this more true than on the magnificent walk marking the boundaries of Ennerdale.”

Chapter 35, The Big Walks
compiled by Ken Wilson and
Richard Gilbert.

I would add an extra condition”on a good day”. The beauty of the walk is not just the achievement of doing it, but more important for me the view you get while doing it. The changing

landscapes from rock scenery to moor and bog and everything in between. It is a classic. You have time to enjoy it and be in the pub for a meal if you start early.

Be careful with the English language, there is an “Ennerdale Horseshoe Fell Race” which can be done by the fittest in 4 to 5 hours. However, it’s title has elasticated the English language, because it only covers a part of the horseshoe, missing out the tops of two of the fells including the highest top on the route! Even without those tops it is reputed to



7am Ennerdale Water. Angler's Crag and Crag Fell are on the right. Bowness Knott is on the right. Pillar at the back.

be a very challenging run. In its early years regularly won by Joss Naylor.

(Wainwright's book seven The Western Fells is the guide of choice and I have highlighted "Wainwrights" in red. All 15 of them, 16 if you go to Steeple)

Anyway, in 1984 Dave Earle was meet leader for the Hut to Hut walk, discussions beforehand showed it was going to be a small meet, as some were in Scotland. Somebody suggested that as we had done the H to H several times why not go to Stair and do the Ennerdale Horseshoe. It seemed fitting as three of us had the same big birthday that year, all within a couple of months of each other.

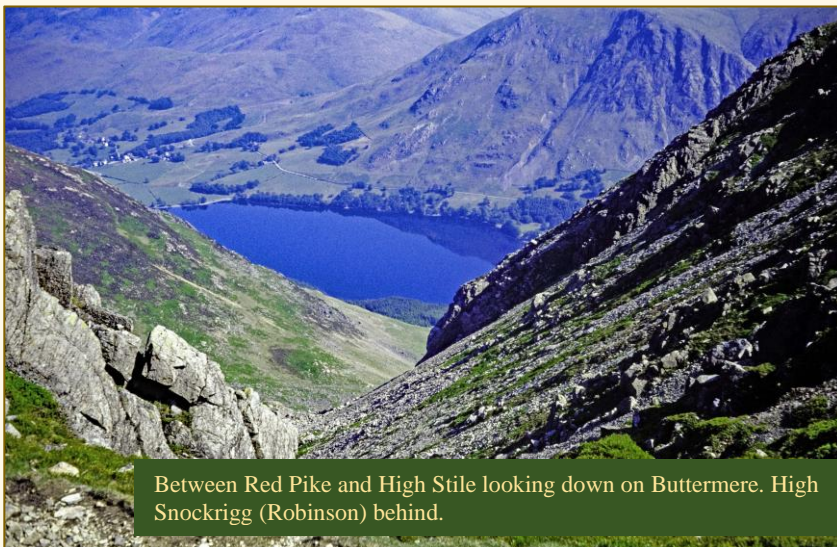
The day arrived and we drove from Stair to Ennerdale car park and were on our way by 7am. It was calm and clear as we walked along the lake shore. We went a little too far and came across farmer's signs "no path". Correcting ourselves, we went round Herdus Crags and up to **Great Borne** 616m, our first top. (I will use metres though in those days we used the 1" OS Lakes map with height in feet.) The views were opening out. We had seen tape markers, unknown to us today was the day of the fell race. Pressing on to **Starling Dodd** 633m and then **Red Pike** 755m with its superb views down to Buttermere and the fells behind it.

In the other direction across Ennerdale was Pillar round to Haycock where we would be later in the day. As its name suggests the rock is reddish but it will soon change to the more familiar “Borrowdale volcanics” (**very hard lavas and ashes formed in major eruptions**) that make up most of the central Lakes. On Red pike we met and had a chat with a fell race marshal who had camped the night on the summit ready for her duties.

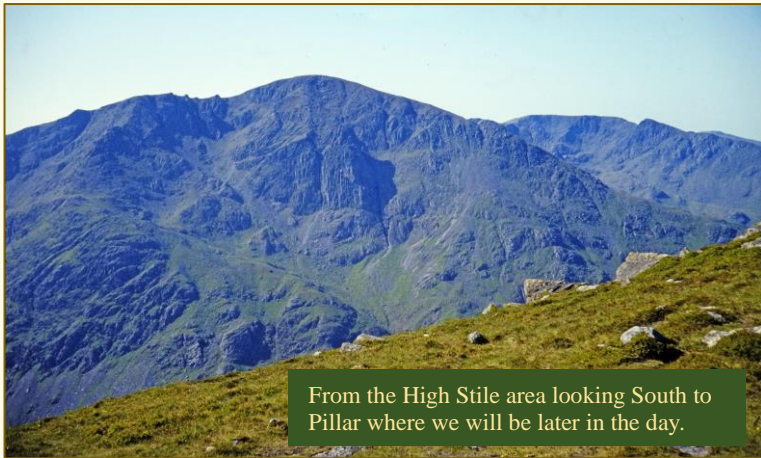
Having got high up it was a sheer delight to walk along to **High Stile** 806m and **High Crag** 744m. The view down to the Craggs beneath us was awe inspiring. From High Crag it was down Gamlin End, a

loose hillside where you had to be careful. It has changed over the years, now it has paths, in part pitched which makes it a lot easier. Then it was Scarth Gap and **Haystacks** 597m, by this time runners were going past, the first few did not acknowledge our greetings, later ones did. We left the bigger more obvious path as there was higher ground on our left and went on a higher smaller path on the edge, the watershed. It is special with sheer views down and Fleetwith Pike standing proud across the way.

The next tops **Brandereth** 715m a bit of a slog up to the top, as it’s fairly spongy ground. **Green Gable** 801 and **Great Gable** 899m-



Between Red Pike and High Stile looking down on Buttermere. High Snockrigg (Robinson) behind.



From the High Stile area looking South to Pillar where we will be later in the day.

detour to Steeple and return is worthwhile), it will only add about 500 metres to the route. It is another Wainwright

but one

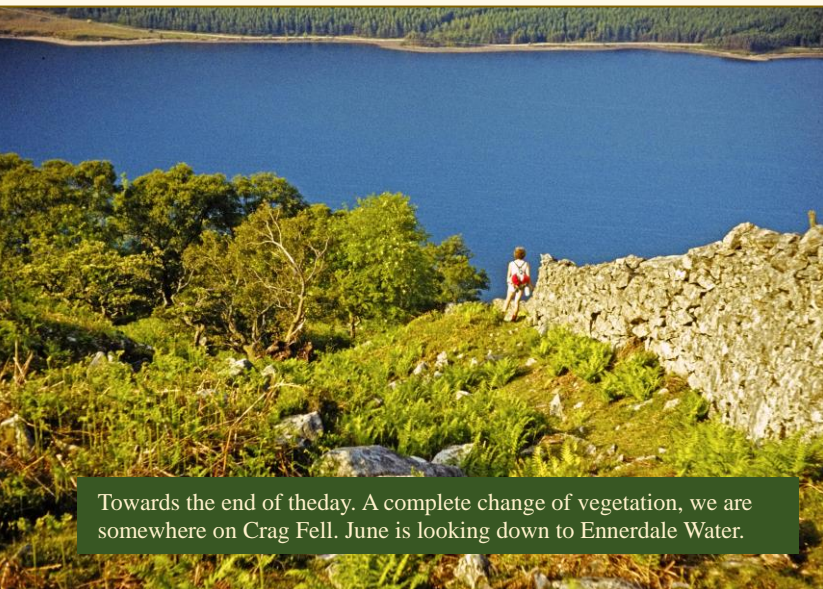
entirely inside the Ennerdale horseshoe, (despite it being as high as Scoat Fell). From Scoat Fell it is on to Haycock 797m and **Caw Fell**.

From Caw Fell you follow down to an unnamed top, which is just over 640m and has Iron Crag on the side. Then above Boathow Crag to **Crag Fell** 523m and down to the car park. Although it was downhill all the way it turned out to take longer than we thought, it was probably the heat, the ground, and our weariness. From the start of the descent down to near the end the walk was an anti-climax. The land was rounded grassy hills, to our right was a stone wall with a reddish hue that blocked off our view of the fells we had walked on all day. In front the view was

the highest point, were the next to be enjoyed. **Kirk Fell** 802m has impressive sides but a large flattish top, but good views from it. I cannot remember if it was this hot day or another that a person made a beeline for us and asked us if we had any salt or crisps as his companion was doubled up with cramp. Unfortunately, we had none. It certainly happened on Kirk Fell.

Pillar the second highest on the route at 892m has its own distinctive charm to look at from neighbouring peaks and to see close to. We spent some time on the top resting as the heat and the effort were taking their toll, we had, earlier in the day had time for a leisurely lunch then we pressed on to **Scoat Fell** 802m, (If you have not been there before a

down to Sellafield (Windscale) and the Irish Sea. It only changed slightly in perspective as we descended. For most of the day we had twists and turns that gave us dramatic new vistas, not now. Once we were on Crag Fell, we had views of the lake and beyond and more variety. At last, the oasis called the Ennerdale Bridge Hotel hove into view and the food and beer was much appreciated.



Towards the end of the day. A complete change of vegetation, we are somewhere on Crag Fell. June is looking down to Ennerdale Water.

I cannot remember who was on the walk with us, there is an article in the magazine for September 1984 written by the meet leader but no names are given. The magazine is available on the club website. The three who had the same big birthday were Dave

Earle, Barrie Crook and myself. June and Chrissie Ikin were definitely there.

Years later to celebrate another big birthday we did it again, but this time when we reached Haycock we headed down to the lake and walked along the south shore of Ennerdale and were rewarded with views across the lake of the hills we had been on all morning.

It was the same group plus Peter and Gillian Llewellyn. Well, we deserved it, we had done it as advertised last time.

It is a brilliant day out but to get the most out of it you need good weather.

Using Os maps and creating a route gives 38km and 2,789m of height gain. I would be interested to know what your GPS device gives when you have done it. Enjoy.

[John Wiseman Feb 2024](#)



Looking out from the Chester hut, Llanberis.
Photo-Christine Fry

Fylde Mountaineering Club

is affiliated to the British Mountaineering Council

www.fyldemc.org

