

Issue No. 62  
July 2011

# *the* Fellfarer





## Editorial

Yes, I know it's a strange cover for a July edition of a newsletter but what can I do? This copy covers the last 3-4 months and that includes the Newtonmore Meet in March. Norman Bell's photograph of the summit of Cairngorm on that meet is the most eye-catching photograph I've received of the club's recent activities, so in it goes.

In the wake of the move to colour printing, I've made some more changes to the layout, one of which is to scrap the list of contents. I was never sure that it had a value in a magazine of only 20 pages but if members tell me that they want it back, it will return in the October edition.

I'd like to thank three people for their unsolicited contributions: Terry Johnson for his article on Trig Points on page 12 and Mike Goff and Jim Duff for adding an international flavour with their letters, from America and Australia respectively, containing linked stories about some of their adventures on the Tasman Sea and in New Zealand, to be found on pages 10 and 11. There's also a piece from regular contributor David Birkett with a rather more familiar story of a day out in the British rain, as well as reports on the programmed club activities.

I'm disappointed that, apart from reports from my own visits, I've had no news from High House, despite fine weather coinciding with members' bookings there.

What did everyone get up to?

Please remember to send those photographs and, if you can, a few words to let us know about your days in Borrowdale.

Ed.

### Cover Photograph:

Mel Middleton, Hugh Taylor and Rod Muncney on the summit of Cairngorm, 16th March 2011

Deadline for contributions for the next *Fellfarer* -  
**AUGUST 31st**

Stop-press: High House photographs just arrived by email - too late!  
See next edition.

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### • BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

**BMC Website:** [www.thebmc.co.uk](http://www.thebmc.co.uk)

**Each Fellfarer has an individual Membership Number**

### • RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

**Ramblers Website:** [www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)

**Fellfarers RA Membership Number:** 1273727

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## OTHER INFORMATION

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This newsletter is also available on the club website  
Some back issues are available on request from the Editor



## Club News

### The death of Mark Weir

It is certain that all of our members who knew Mark learned within hours about his tragic death in his helicopter on the 8th of March. The April newsletter was already in the hands of the printer then and so had no mention of his passing.

The findings of the investigation into the cause of the crash have not yet been published at the time of writing but in discussions amongst members there is always an element of disbelief. We all know that Mark used his helicopter as we use our cars and above all else he was a consummate pilot. Pilot error seems an unlikely cause.

The Ed visited him at the mine on Friday 4th March to ask him if he would like to buy a copy of the Fellfarers book. Mark gave a slightly embarrassed laugh and said that he wasn't a book-man, "The only book I've ever read in my life is the Helicopter Pilot's Training Manual - and I still keep reading it now!" he said. To add a further note of irony, Mark then said, "Maybe in 10 or 15 years time, when I slow down and have time to read....." He only had 4 days left.

This remarkable man was a long-standing friend to the Club and to many of its members. His funeral was attended by Krysia Niepokojczycka, Peter Goff, and Tony & Ann Walshaw, all of whom were there as personal friends and also on behalf of K Fellfarers.

The rest of us will remember him adding a touch of excitement when he came to visit our big 75th birthday party:



### Archaeology at High House - Meeting with the Trust

Committee members Roger Atkinson, Hugh Taylor, Kevin Ford and Mick Fox met representatives of the National Trust: Penny Webb, our local contact, and Jamie Lund, their Regional Archaeologist, on Wednesday 6th April to discuss the archaeological finds made during the March Working Weekend (see page 9).

Mr Lund was impressed with the way in which we have carried out the excavation so far and extremely interested in what we have found. He confirmed our thoughts that the doorway uncovered would have been for humans rather than cattle but that doesn't mean that what we have found there was ever a dwelling. He is at a loss to explain exactly what we have found without more information. It looks as if further excavation will yield more of the enigmatic floor but the Trust have no funding for such work and so they are encouraging the Club to continue with its digging.

**The plan is this: The Time Team (members listed above plus Fred Underhill and any other volunteers) will continue with their careful stripping away of the soil and debris to expose as much of the floor as remains. The area will be recorded in photographs and measured drawings (the Trust will help by providing equipment here) and the whole lot will be covered over again to protect it!**

Mr Lund also provided the Ed with a 40 page document describing a similar, but much more extensive, excavation on a NT property at Peel Place, Lanthwaite Green, Buttermere in 2009. One of the illustrations from that document, below (compare with the photo at the bottom of page 9), shows just how similar the two digs are:



Plate 20: View southeast of Trench 3 showing wall foundations (121) and cobbled surface (119)

A pdf copy of the whole Peel Place document is available to members by email. Let the Ed know if you would like to see it.

**Meanwhile, please do not interfere with the excavation.**

### Water supply at High House

Those members who were staying at High House at the end of April will be aware that the water supply dried up. There had been several weeks without rain and some members walked up to inspect the water intake tank, so recently rebuilt to prevent this happening! They discovered that the National Trust had apparently added tanks and carried out other work to improve the farm's water supply at the water intake - at the expense of ours!

Angry phone calls from a Committee member resulted in prompt action from the Trust and a return phone call on the same day to assure the Club that (1) no new installation has taken place but that some tanks had had new tops put on them and that (2) the Trust had now made some emergency alterations to ensure that our supply was maintained. There have been no further reports of a water shortage there.

The story hasn't ended yet, however. A chance inspection on 31st May revealed that there are several tanks set into the ground alongside the farm dam, plus an additional intake point and lots of surface piping. The Committee will pursue the matter with the Trust again. Meanwhile, please report any problem with the water supply to a member of the Committee as soon as it arises.

*Club News continues on page 19*



# Honister Crag

The Honister Via Ferrata and Mine Tour  
Friday 4th March 2011

*This article was written just two days before Mark Weir was killed in his helicopter. After much thought, I decided to include it without alteration.*

*Ed.*



Would I pay £48 for a trip into the mines and a guided hike up the old miners incline on Fleetwith Pike? Not bl\*\*dy likely! I had done both of course, and much more, in amongst the old workings, back in the days before Mark Weir took over - and it didn't cost a penny then. Lots of Fellfarers had. I have often wondered, though, how much of that fascinating interior was now on show to the tourists and when the Secretary spotted an announcement in the Westmorland Gazette that residents of Cumbria could do the mine tour and the via ferrata this week FREE we signed up immediately. I spread the word amongst a few Fellfarers and Kevin Ford also decided to come along.

About 20 of us were shepherded into the 'kitting up' room, issued with helmets, harnesses and cows-tails and given a short lesson on using the clips to stay secure. As we walked to the mine entrance we spotted more Fellfarers - Graham and Irene - arriving for the mine tour.

The Kimberley entrance had all been walled up the last time I was there and our then 'secret' entrance higher up the fellside had been reached by clambering up on the rusting bolts still visible on the steep slab to our right. Now we just strolled into the darkness, helmets occasionally clunking on the low roof of the mine. We emerged into day light again and began to ascend the steel staples. I was pleasantly surprised because we were soon on steep rock, real v.f. terrain where I had expected to be just walking the old miners track which had been originally advertised. The day was cold and very misty so we missed the views between our toes of the road far below but the conditions made the crag very 'atmospheric'.

The young (ish) ladies at the front of the party were all finding the day very exciting; hands were shaking visibly as they fumbled with the clips on the cable and one short vertical ascent, in Bull Gill, had one of them hyperventilating with fear. Then came the zip-wire! The wire crosses the gill and in the misty conditions the lower end of it was invisible. The first lady to be launched into the

air screamed as she disappeared into the clouds.

Towards the top the route joins the old track and after another section stumbling steeply uphill inside the mine we walked amongst the ruins and workings at the top of Black Star to emerge only a few yards from the summit of Fleetwith Pike. We didn't visit the summit, perhaps because, like Henry David Thoreau, we believed that *"The tops of*

*mountains are among the unfinished parts of the globe, whither it is a slight insult to the gods to climb and pry into their secrets, and try their effect on our humanity. Only daring and insolent men, perchance, go there."* It was either that or the fact that it was so misty that there was nothing to see of the view.

We strolled down and found we only had just enough time for a hurried sandwich before we were given helmets and lamps for the mine tour.

If the via ferrata had been much better than I expected the mine tour was something of a disappointment. The guide was excellent and I learned much about slate mining and the geology that produced the 'best slate in the world' but we only glimpsed the bottom of one of those tremendous subterranean inclines that rise almost to the summit of the mountain and which had been such a memorable feature of those early explorations. We did visit the huge cavern of the Kimberley mine, however, with its vast unsupported inclined ceiling which I suspect could cover a couple of football pitches. We also visited the chamber that Mark intends to turn into an underground theatre and concert hall, before being given an 'inspirational' talk on why the proposed zip-wire running all the way from the summit of Fleetwith Pike to the top of Honister Pass is such a good idea. Leaving aside all the arguments about the desirability of increasing tourist numbers in the Lakes, it has to be said that there is much of what Mark Weir has done that is praiseworthy, not least in providing employment for 40 young local people. Now, would I pay £48 for a trip into the mines and the via ferrata on Fleetwith Pike? Do you know, I think I might!



# The Appetite Enhancer and KFF Annual Dinner

Saturday 5th March 2011



*Kati, Gary, (Oscar), Gordon, Krysia, Walter, Bill, Brenda, Alec, Clare, Jean, Val, Roger*

A lucky thirteen gathered on a chilly overcast morning at Crosscrake Church for Krysia's pre-dinner Appetite Enhancer.

We started, unpromisingly, by walking over freshly ploughed fields towards what must be one of the least used footbridges across the main line railway. Things quickly picked up, though, and were soon striding and chatting our way across green fields to the line of the former, and perhaps the future, Lancaster Canal.

A mile of roadway took us to the Hincaster Tunnel and some time was spent there in idle speculation about the possibility of paddling through it one day. Today, though, we went the way of the horses, up and over Tunnel Hill, to rejoin the canal on the way to Crooklands.

There was no letting up the pace and those who called in at the Crooklands Hotel for a 'comfort stop' found they had to race to catch up with the leaders.

Peasey Beck, with its industrial curiosities, was followed to Endmoor

and thence, via a steep ascent of Wood Bank (above, everyone but the Editor on the summit) to Summerlands where, for some, the appearance of 'the Big House' there was something of a revelation. There's always something new to discover isn't there?

Now we discovered that Krysia had planned a sting-in-the-tail finish. Actually Skettlegill Hill rises to barely 300 feet above sea level but it strung out the walkers on the ascent and its summit gave excellent views (as had Wood Bank before it) of the farmland and villages of Preston Richard.

Crosscrake Church nestled in the landscape just below us and we were soon back at the cars, easing off our boots and thanking Krysia for an entertaining few hours walking.

Later that day 35 (I think) Fellfarers gathered at the excellent Eagle and Child for another KFF Annual Dinner (below). Will we be there next year? There was some talk of moving our browsing on to pastures new.

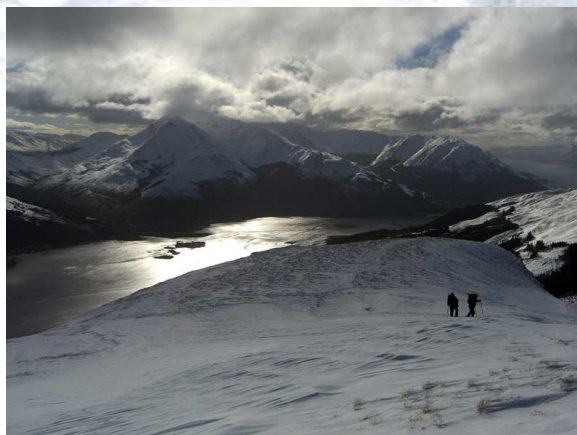




# THE NEWTONMORE HOTEL MEET

12th - 17th March 2011

Incorporating Midweek Walk No. 12



*We've been very lucky with the weather on the previous two Hotel Meets. Would our luck hold for the third year? Of course it would - maybe! In the days leading up to our setting off, we were all unsure whether we would get through. Very heavy snowfalls for the time of year had made many Scottish roads impassable only a few days earlier. We all arrived unscathed, though, and Sara welcomed an unprecedented 32 Fellfarers to the hotel (even remembering Henry and Oscar - Frank and Dorothy's Scotties - by name) this year.*

On the first day most members were a little unsure about venturing out at high level in such conditions and the result was a mass outing of about 20 of us around the Wild Cat Trail. The Trail encircles the village and would take perhaps a couple of hours in summer. In the snow which was knee-deep in places, we managed to make it last all day! One member nearly made it last a lifetime when she wandered off in search of a hut circle in the trees. She was rescued later from a deep drift where she had fallen onto her back and couldn't get up again. We'll spare her blushes by not naming her - at least until the next slideshow (the Ed filmed the rescue. He he!)

We spread far and wide on the second day. Some of us escaped the big blanket of cloud over the eastern hills by tackling one of the Loch Leven Corbetts - Mam nan Gualainn. The lighting was gorgeous (*left bottom two pics*) and we had great fun floundering

but the snow beat us in the end and we turned back when quite near the summit: *"The hill will be there another day but our dinner won't".*

Five mountaineers and two Scotties were more successful in achieving the summit of Carn na Fhreiceadain and others ticked off a couple of Munros above the Drumochter Pass. One group did a circuit of Loch Morlich, some by ski and some by boot. Everyone was smiling at dinner time.

A grey day on Tuesday, with more flakes fluttering down from a dirty sky, kept most of us at low(ish) levels again. Meall a'Bhuachaille was ticked off by one group but many of us seemed to gravitate towards the circuit of Loch an Eilean and the excellent cake-and-coffee shop at Inshriach. The snow-clad trees around the loch and the profusion of birds at the feeders outside the café were highlights in an unadventurous day.

Wednesday was better. Val writes:

## **Mid-week Walk No. 12 Wednesday 16 March 2011**

*Val Calder, Steve Edgar, Roger & Margaret Atkinson, Mary & Brett Forrest, Joan Abbott, Val Hunter, Margaret Cooper, Ellie, Clare Fox & Tina Ford.*

*After three days of indifferent weather that included snow, sleet, rain and wind we woke up on our last full day to perfect blue skies with not a cloud in sight.*

*Over breakfast it was decided that we would walk into Coire Ardaire in the Creag Meagaidh National Nature Reserve. It was announced that anyone interested in*



the walk should meet at the Nature Conservancy Car Park at Aberarder, which is situated half way along Loch Laggan.

So 4 cars carrying a total of 12 people met in the car park, most people took photos of the stunning snow covered mountains and then we set off. The walk initially was along a tarmac road to the farm where it then became a rough track before becoming a path to the coire. It was so warm in the sunshine that at the first group stop most people had to remove a layer of clothing and after stuffing various over-garments in rucksacks on we went (top two pictures, right).

Further up the valley the snow on the track was knee deep but others had been before us and a path had been made for us to walk along in single file. Suddenly along the snake of people the message came "Steve has lost something". It appeared that he had lost a filter off his camera, but more importantly he couldn't find the car keys! Following a thorough search of pockets, rucksack and surrounding ground with no results a decision was made to retrace steps to further the search, Brett offered his assistance – gladly received. Along the track behind us came another party who were asked if they had seen any of these lost items in the snow. The filter had been found but unfortunately not the keys.

Steve & Brett decide they would search the route back to the car park and we would continue onwards. The snow was getting deeper, it was not a path now but just deep holes where we had to place our feet. The going was slow. We eventually came to a stop and decided that lunch was appropriate. From here we could see the progress of the group in front and it looked as though they were on deep virgin snow and with another party coming up behind we could also watch them (it turned out that both parties were from Plas Y Brenin and were going snow holing for the night). Their progress was very slow and a decision was made to turn around and make our way back to the cars looking for the lost keys on the way.

As we approached the car park we could see that the tailgate of the car was raised and an assumption was made that they must have found the keys. Of course the first question asked was "where did you find them". Brett explained that the search

on the return, with a special effort where Steve had removed his coat during the first rest stop, had produced no luck. With no results using logical and methodical means Brett had instigated a strip search of Steve in the car park. He said that after getting through layers of clothing the keys were eventually found caught between his socks and boots. Was this true? No, eventually the truth came out the keys had been found in the snow in the middle of the car park where he had taken his first photo of the day!

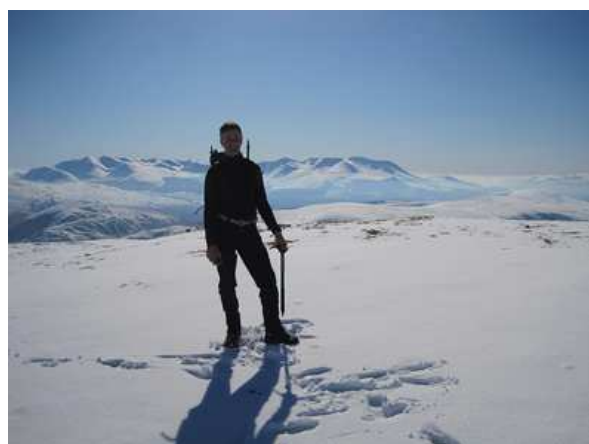
We all got back into the cars and as our day had been cut short due to the snow we decided to stop at Drim an Aird car park for a short walk which incorporated a viewing platform above Pattack Falls situated in the gorge featured as a location in the TV series Monarch of the Glen. There was no snow here in the woods and everything was fresh and green, and with sunlight streaming through the branches - it was magical. As with every mid week walk it had to end with a coffee shop, so Roger, as leader of the convoy, was to stop at the first refreshment establishment he found. Mountain bike centre café - shut! Detour to a Pottery Cafe on the road to Dalwhinnie – shut! Laggan village – nothing! Hotel at side of road advertising afternoon teas – shut!

So we were now back in Newtonmore and not to be beaten we ended up in the cafe in the village who puts on an excellent selection of coffees, teas, scones & cakes. Perfect.

On the same day, two of us had an exciting drive up the snowy road into Glen Roy (the Ed had to take bits of the underside of his car back to Kendal in a bin bag) to view the 'parallel roads' there and to experience a brilliant day on Beinn Iarruinn (middle two pics right).

Geal-Charn Mor was another top that fell to the relentless KFF hill-bagging force (title picture and bottom right) and the Munro-team had a superb day on Cairngorm that yielded the fine ice-sculpture photograph on the cover.

It's a shame it had to end but we at least had a fine day (below) for the drive home - and one last hill, Meall na Leitreach, on the way for some!





# Working Weekend

18th - 20th March 2011



The Hut Sub-committee's list of work to be done this March was extensive again. On the job list there's now one page of regular jobs plus one page of scheduled (new) jobs and a blank page for members to write down any jobs missed by the H S-c. In addition to the long list of general maintenance jobs, those unsung but essential cleaning, repairing, checking, painting, and replacing tasks (*title photo above from Maja*), the tally included:

- 1.Meeting the electrician to discuss adding emergency lights in the upstairs rooms and around the outside of the building.
- 2.Continuing the work on replacing the rainwater system.
- 3.Repairing ceilings after the emergency work to deal with burst pipes at Christmas.
- 4.Painting the walls upstairs (to comply with the terms of the Lease).
- 5.Clearing the stones from the external escape route behind the Men's End
- 6.Rebuilding the wall behind the tin hut, including building (if possible) steps
- 7.Clearing away the left-over stones
- 8.Painting the carved name on the boulder .

The targets were (very nearly) achieved, and more. The spirit of KFF working weekends is such that nobody ever runs out of work, unless they want to. "If there are no jobs left, create some" But you all know that.

Particularly satisfying for the Hut Sub-committee, and probably for the builders too [*let's name them Jason, Kevin S, Colin, Mark, Gavin and Peter*] was the fine job done



behind the far corner of the Men's End, where the walls now look safe and sound (*bottom left*) and, after some 11th hour negotiation with the H.S-c chairman, now include some fine new steps (*middle left*).

The Ed. spent some time painting in the lettering carved into the boulder by the bottom bridge. He had looked forward to this potentially peaceful and rewarding task. He hadn't realised, however that the boulder had been, for some time, a favourite No.2 toilet stop for the farm dogs (and probably others too).....Still, it's done now.

The Hut looks, once again, spick and span. There will always be work to do there and the Committee must always stay vigilant (see the Club News about the water supply on page 3) but it has to be said that High House is in as good a shape as it has ever been.

If you came, thank you.  
If you didn't, there's always September.  
If you're not there in September, remember :  
"we know where you live."



It began in that casual way that is typical of the Fellfarers: the mess of boulders left after the repairs to the stonework of the Men's End last year needed tidying away. A suitable way of 'disposing' of them seemed to be to partly rebuild the tumbled walls of the old cow-house which needed, in any case, to be made safe. The job was added to the Working Weekend list and work began at about midday on the Saturday.

As the fallen boulders were trundled aside to give a clear working area for the rebuilding, Richard Mercer made a surprising discovery: 3 stone slabs laid together to form what appeared to be a step in front of the original wall-line. Could there have been a doorway here? Several Committee members suddenly decided that this was far more interesting work than their current tasks (*upper photo, right*) and grabbed shovels, trowels and brushes...

Further careful excavation did indeed reveal a stone threshold with insets at each end to take a wooden frame for a very narrow door - suitable for humans rather than animals. The 'Time Team' excavators began to speculate: could this end of the building have been the original dwelling before a larger house was put on the opposite end much later? That would explain the puzzle of the misalignment of the two buildings. Guessing and talking would get us nowhere, however, and we continued to peel off, with increasing excitement, the few inches of accumulated soil, rubbish, ashes, and fragments of roofing slate. A cobbled floor began to appear, with an internal threshold stone at right angles to the first one. Each stone uncovered added to the picture of an ancient floor being revealed for the first time since, at least, the early 1930s, when the roof collapsed over this area (*opposite page*).

The dinner gong was struck, we disappeared inside for the shared meal and our first archaeology session was over. The digging team all headed home that evening and the rain came on Sunday so the dig remained undisturbed for a week.

On Friday 25th the team returned and, with a more disciplined approach now (not brushing dirt onto each others work areas) we spent the day uncovering a further area of cobbled and flagged floor, including what appear to be the bases for internal partitions (*bottom right*). The puzzle gets more and more perplexing as the work proceeds and we are no nearer, yet, to understanding what we are uncovering.

At this point it was clear that we had a duty to inform our landlords, The National Trust, about the find and to invite them to see it before we continued. The Trust replied immediately and we met two of their representatives on site on Wednesday 6th April. The results of that meeting are reported in 'Club News' on page 3.





# BLUFFING IT

*An account of a passage from Hobart Tasmania to South Island New Zealand with Rejane Belanger and Mike Goff. 2011*

Jim Duff

You can choose your weather for setting off on a passage but if it's more than a few days you cannot predict what you will get on your landfall. For the sea area around Stewart Island, our destination, the New Zealand Pilot says that the whole area, from Foveaux Strait and Stewart Island south to Campbell Island is "recognized as a particularly stormy part of the world." and that "gales are frequent in all seasons. They often last many days with lulls of only few hours". The Stewart Island Cruising Guide adds that there is little difference between the gale frequency in the summer and winter months around Stewart Island, and seasonal predictions are highly unreliable: "For cruise planning wind strengths and directions in the vicinity of Stewart Island are a lottery."

So it came as no surprise that after seven days of mixed weather, two gales and a 36-hour calm, our passage from Tasmania to New Zealand's South Island something nasty was brewing. The 24 hour forecast was for three days of gales and as we were closing in on Foveaux strait just two days sailing away it was decision time. Already after a crossing it was very tempting to keep going but its graven in granite that in a gale its best to stay well offshore. To run into the strait in gale force winds is would be dangerous as it shallows down to a mere 30 meters and is no place to be when big seas start to break.

The other option was to head south of Stewart Island keeping in deeper open water and just 20 hours later at 1600 hours with the wind risen to 30 knots and gusting and we hove-to 75 miles WNW of the Snares group of islands 85 miles SSW of the southern tip of Stewart island in 1000m of water.

With the bright orange 80 foot<sup>2</sup> storm jib already set on the inner forestay and a third reef in the main (we had designed our new main with all reefs moved north, leaving the third reef a small heavily reinforced area to balance the storm jib, opting to forgo a storm trysail), we were pleased to see how sweetly Dingo took up position. All previous practice heave-to-ing had been in lighter winds on our shake down cruise round Tasmania the previous season and we had not been convinced.

As night fell the wind increased to 40 knots with rain squalls and increased again after midnight to 45 knots from the SW. As the roar of sea and rigging increased, the motion became violent with Dingo frequently falling off waves and the new standing rigging, double backstays and runners suddenly seeming like a great idea. The washboards were tied in with the upper one being clear perspex helping to reduce feelings of isolation for the deck watch and those below.

Around 0400 a sharp crack and mad flapping announced the starboard storm jib sheet had frayed through against the shrouds. We hardened the remaining sheet and held our collective breath waiting to see if fore-reaching would work, which it did.

Dawn came slowly under a leaden sky revealing cross seas with frequent breaking crests on a confused pyramidal swell. The weather forecast predicted 48 more hours of gales but there was a drop in the wind for several hours and we spent the morning struggling with incipient seasickness as we laid out the lines for the drogue in case we had to run and the sea anchor in case we had to stop. This took an incredible effort as the motion was still wild and seasickness, while making everything extra hard, also saps your decision making and will. I promised never again to leave these basic preparations till the last minute ever again!

By early afternoon with the unexpected lull persisting and as the wind was a little more westerly we had another crucial decision to make. To spend another two nights hove-to or run in to Stewart Island and try for the wilderness Port Pegasus. At least we would end up running along a coast not onto it and with the wind more westerly we could expect to get into the lee of the island before the water shoaled too



much.

With a bit of the jib rolled out plus the storm jib and third reef we were making good progress. Again Dingo was behaving well, easy to control as she surged down the face of the seas. As the second night fell the wind started to rise again with dangerous yawing that was fixed by taking down the main and lashing the sail and its boom bag tight. As the Fleming wind vane couldn't handle the down wind and the autopilot could not handle the rolling, it was hand steering all night. Concentration was needed to keep tracking square and a one hour trick was as much as the helmsman could manage and Mike earned his helmsman first class

gold star. After midnight the wind was back at 40 knots and the remaining scrap of jib was rolled in leaving just the storm jib.

In the grey light of a cold and cheerless dawn we made out the loom of the coastal hills 5 miles away through the scudding cloud base and began to think of shelter, warm drinks, food and dry clothes in our wet, cold, hungry state. Anging in toward Broad Passage, one of three entrances into Port Pegasus, the wind came on the nose and blew as it can from that haven. Motor sailing at full revs we were standing still in a confused sea.

In our exhausted state it was tough accepting we couldn't make it in. We bore away and started to run up the coast. As we did the wind picked up to 50 knots, gusts at first and then prolonged spells that mixed sea and air producing a white maelstrom making it hard to breath and reducing visibility to a cable or so. On storm jib alone we were constantly surfing and making 9 knots in breaking seas with a tendency to broach due to the windage of our spray hood and dodgers.

At this point Rejane radioed Merri on Bluff Fishermen's Radio (Ch 65) who suggested our best bet was Lords River 20 miles up the coast. This saved our bacon as I had rejected that option as too narrow with failure to enter putting us on a lee shore.

Running with the wind on the port quarter allowed us to slowly work in shorewards to within a couple of cables of the cliffs just upwind of Surf Head. We pulled in close under the head and calm water with fierce williwaws ahead dancing out of the , the entrance of Lords River. Now motoring hard we were spun round 180 degrees twice by the fierce wind channeling down off the mountains as we tried to forge up the narrow inlet. The third time the wind drove us sideways towards rocks so we had to run back to the entrance and start all over again.

Perhaps it was lull or a few more revs or just getting into a slightly wider section of the channel but finally we were in, motoring slowly as Mike and Rejane re-rigged our trusty Rocna bower anchor (all anchors having been taken off the bows along with a third of the chain before the crossing, which in retrospect was a good idea). Suddenly off to starboard, snugged up in Cooley Cove, we saw a fishing boat and quick as a flash hailed them for a tie alongside. With this accomplished, we stood stupefied and numb with fatigue after more than 48 hours without meaningful sleep or food, and a lot of fear, seasickness and adrenaline.

This was not quite the end of our stormy passage as we were not yet legally in New Zealand. Merri had passed on to Customs that we were making a safety decision to shelter and they had agreed but urged us to get into Bluff asap to check in. We spent two days in Lords River till the gale abated but then had to pull into Paterson Inlet as another 2-day gale came through. Finally, 14 days after departure from Tasmania, we crossed Foveaux Strait and tied up on Bluff's rough old Fishermen's Wharf and checked in formally with Customs.

Over the ensuing three weeks for sea area Puysegur off Stewart island a storm warning was issued for every day but three. While we had been hove-to a local boat sheltering in Port Pegasus was recording wind speeds of 50 knots and the wind speed recorder in Bluff Harbour recorded a gust of 84 knots.



# A Letter from America

30th March 2011

Mike Goff

*I just got back from 3 months in the lands of the Southern Ocean with Jim Duff and Rejane.*

*Earlier, Pete had sent a copy of the commemorative book you and your team produced for the Fellfarers 75th Anniversary. It might have been jet lag or the sheer wonder of the book that kept me up all night on arrival at Hinkle Mountain, home at last. When I closed the delightful cover it was Lakeland in my dreams, not New Zealand. I think you've all done a marvelous job of linking the long history of High House into a personable documentary in which anyone with the slightest connection with that corner of Lakeland can share. I'm reading it more thoroughly now as the wind whistles in the woods outside my 'High House'. Perhaps it's the substance of the outdoors that even the writing of it can set the pulse throbbing. We've all been so lucky to share such companionship over the years, then have it bound into a record of memories. I kept a journal of crossing the Tasman Sea on board Yacht Dingo with Jim and Rejane. I hope to write a story about it which I'll send to you when completed. In the meantime, here is an account of final tumultuous week in New Zealand. Looking forward to a bright summer.*

Mike

I arrived home in West Virginia to a false spring, mild and pleasant that set the apricot trees a-blooming and the other orchard fruits bursting their buds. Now the true March weather is a-blowing sleet and mist across the bleak hills and bare woodland. I like it because it gives breathing space to dawdle over writing letters and taking tea with a favourite book before plunging into the garden ritual that will keep me hard at it through summer's eternal demands. It gives me time in the rocking chair appreciating the quiet spot wherein I chose to live, avoiding news of new wars and catastrophes that are often of our own making. I'm reading Tim Flannery's latest book, "Here on Earth", my last purchase in Sydney before the long flight home. It's an argument for hope in a world bent on self destruction, a topic engaging much thought these days, though provoking too little preventative action. My own optimism, enacted entirely in these woods and garden have no other motive than eating well and keeping myself happy. My antics in Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand these past three months made a more profound impression than I could have imagined and its effects invade my thoughts when I have a moment to dwell upon it. I remember my early years of living in the U.S. being overwhelmed by its immense geographical impact giving me unlimited opportunities for life and discovery. As time passed I began to think that perhaps, I'd seen and experienced all that mattered.

Walking the wild places in the lands of the southern ocean and sailing upon its riotous seas, I could have been on another planet. Strolling through such unfamiliar diversity, watching the skimming flight of Albatross and Petrels from a heaving, canted yacht crossing the Tasman sea, reminded me that there is no end to earth's wonders and there should be no end to one's questing. Our first landfall after the crossing was on the east coast of Stewart Island where in the shelter of Lord's River cove I met my first Kiwis. The larger than life brothers, named Fluffy and Jesus are fishermen. We were invited to tie up to their boat to save us seeking a separate anchorage after escaping a violent storm. Our jovial friends invited us to join them below with a beer, but we were to exhausted and retired to our bunks. Next morning Jesus presented us with several large blue cod, which Fluffy filleted with great dexterity. The finest food we could wish for; welcome to New Zealand.

And so we approached the country that had fascinated me since I was a kid. We had to wait several days for the storm to abate before crossing the Forveax strait and entering the Bluff Harbour channel. After mooring at Bluff Harbour at the extreme tip of South Island for Immigration and Customs check, our party began to stretch our sea legs to be in better shape to explore the diverse wilderness of Stewart Island. We sailed yacht Dingo back across the strait into delightful coves and anchorages that gave access to unique woodland habitats and spectacular granite domes. With my three months stay down-under coming to an end, I left Stewart Island and with the few days I had left in New Zealand planned to visit the heartland of the South Island west coast. However, losing my baggage in Invercargill balked those plans. Instead, out of necessity I embarked on a tour of New Zealand by plane, bus and

train which opened up for me an unimagined spectrum of the country's life and culture. Fjordland could wait. I went in search of replacement passport and visas from consulates and embassies which can be difficult to access. Before leaving Invercargill my companions, still on Stewart Island were contacted by Fisherman's Radio. Rejane arrived to resupply me with clothes and money. Then I set off on my first mission, the British Embassy in Wellington.

I flew north from Invercargill at a window seat with a grandstand view of Fjordland's headwaters till the cloud closed in. The view opened up again at the crossing of the turbulent waters of Cook's strait and the hilly confines of Wellington Bay. My arrival coincided with, a huge festival in town, so there was no room at the Backpacker Hostel. Having no baggage I joined the multitude along the harbour quay enjoying five loud rock-bands playing to the dancing, reveling throng. Next morning after spending the night in a comfortable cricket pavilion I explored the historic harbour waterfront and the outstanding National Museum and Art Gallery till it closed. I now had a bed at the Backpacker Hostel with its striking pea green tiled facade. It was crowded with travelers exploring New Zealand.

Despite a comfortable bed my sleep was troubled by thoughts of the awful possibility of missing my flight back to the U.S. and its consequences.

The British Embassy in Wellington is positioned on a quiet street close to the city centre. The gatekeeper ushered me through the security check and into the lobby. Few other visitors were all victims of the recent earthquake in Christchurch, English tourists who had lost most of their documents and baggage in the chaos and destruction. The embassy staff were kind and considerate, and in view of the circumstances the issuance of new documents was just a formality. By evening I once again was the possessor of a smart, red British passport.

Next day I booked a seat on a cheap, overnight bus Auckland, my next mission to gain admittance to the U.S. consulate, Fortress America. I arrived in the chaos of Auckland rush hour, not traffic snarls but throngs of people in summer dress trotting off to work down the sunlit streets.

I checked in at rather dingy Backpacker hostel and tried to call the U.S. Consulate; all was busy. The groundwork for my visit had been arranged before I left Invercargill, and I had a contact there; a certain agent "B". So I attempted a visit in person and entered the Immigration office without difficulty. "B" was there to greet me, a friendly young woman from Maryland who took my British Passport as proof of identity and began processing my permit to enter the U. S., my permanent resident now these past forty years. I spent the rest of the day at the Auckland harbour quay looking at boats, especially yachts. I saw a big ocean racer moored to a dock with a snapped -off mast at half-height and all the spars and rigging lying athwart the clean deck in a tangle. And wondered what kind of a storm could reek such damage.

Next morning I said goodbye to "B" as I picked up the last crucial document needed to exit Australasia and enter the New World America. I spent the rest of the day exploring Auckland took the night bus, a bright new Scania Vabis doubledecker, taking the front seat aloft, and gazing into the dark southern night all the way back to Wellington.

I would of course spend my last night in New Zealand at the "Green Palace" Hostel and as I alighted from the Swedish doubledecker and walked into the lobby a couple came towards me, smiling. Bob and Tina Miller from Prescott, Arizona have been friends of mine since early 1970's. They were about to embark on a bicycling tour of New Zealand.

Next morning at the airport I bought a phone card to call my friends in Invercargill, Colin and Noma who saved my skin and borne me up when I lost everything. As I thanked Colin he asked, Did you get your bags? They've been found, they're at the airport. I got my bags back from the airport police and reached inside. There was my precious diary from the Tasman sea crossing.

Ah, but that's another story.



# TRIANGULATION POINTS

Also known as trigonometrical points, triangulation pillars, trigonometrical stations, trig stations, trig beacons or trig points.

Terry Johnson



We all love a trig point. How often have we used them? They mark the point for directions, a compass bearing, a stop for lunch, a summit achieved or "we'll just keep on going until we get to the trig point",? Countless children have been photographed sitting on top of them but what are they there for? I suppose you might say – not a lot, these days but they have played a very important part of our lives particularly to those of us that walk the hills and use maps.

They are in fact small tapered concrete or stone pillars, 1.2m high and designed to serve as a firm base for cartographers surveying instruments; usually sited at prominent locations at higher ground such as hill tops, so that there is a direct line of sight from one to the next. By sitting a theodolite (an accurate protractor built into a telescope) onto the 3 pronged metal plate built into the top of a trig point, accurate readings could be taken and angles measured between other nearby columns to calculate relative altitude and distance or translation onto O.S. mapping. This process was called "triangulation"

The columns were designed by a Brigadier Martin Hotine who was head of the **"Trigonometrical and Levelling Division of the O.S."**. Our original maps were made by triangulation and for a second main survey by Ordnance Survey in 1934 this process was used again and resulted in the building of many "trig" points. Their precise locations were determined by triangulation and the details in between were then filled in with less precise methods.

Modern O. S. maps are now based on aerial photographs but large numbers of the pillars still remain, some having had new bolts and rivets installed and which now form the "Passive Station" network – this constitutes a set of around 1000 locations which have been accurately measured using GPS technology.

But what is "Ordnance Survey"? Ordnance is a branch of

government service dealing with military stores and materials – mounted guns, artillery.

The roots of O.S. go back to 1747. King George 11 commissioned a military survey of the Scottish highlands to facilitate subjection of the clans following the Jacobite revolt of 1745. William Roy was the engineer responsible for this pioneering work and the survey was produced at 1 inch to 1000 yards. It was not until 1790 that the Board of Ordnance (a pre-decessor of the modern Ministry of Defence) began a military survey starting with the south coast of England in anticipation of a French invasion.

By 1791 the Board had purchased the new "Ramsden" theodolite (an improved successor to the one which Roy had used) and work began in mapping southern Great Britain using a baseline that Roy himself had measured and which crosses the present Heathrow airport.

In 1801, the first of the 1 inch to 1 mile (1:63,360) was published detailing the county of Kent with Essex soon thereafter. During the next 20 years roughly 1/3 of England and Wales was mapped at that scale. It was gruelling work. Major Thomas Colby walked 586 miles in 22 days on a reconnaissance in 1819. In 1824, Colby and his team moved to Ireland to prepare the 6 inch to 1 mile valuation survey and Ireland was completed in 1846. This whole project aroused suspicions and tensions in rural Ireland.

Colby was not only involved in the design of specialist measuring equipment but he established a system of collection of place names and so re-organised the map making process to produce clear and accurate plans. He believed in leading from the front, travelling with his men, helping to build camps and, as each survey session drew to a close, arranging mountain top parties with enormous plum puddings. (Now there's a thought).

Ordnance Survey reflects the original military purpose of the organisation and its logo includes the War Department's broad arrow heraldic mark that we see on bench marks and the brass plates incorporated into trig point pillars.

Many trig points have been removed to restore the natural state of the landscape but some are still used as passive GPS stations and so maintained by O. S. There has been a move for anyone or organisation to "adopt" a trig point; which you may be inclined to do but even though many are now redundant, they will still serve the walking fraternity in a very practical and aesthetic way.



The trig point on Cadair Idris took 12 days to build and a team of pack horses from a local coal merchant was used to carry up 42 cwt of chippings, sand and cement to the 2930 ft summit. The builder complained of "terrible mists and heavy rain". In Wales? Surely not?



## A Trig Point Competition!



The Fellfarer  
July 2011  
12

Terry Johnson has very generously offered to donate a prize for this trig-point spotting competition. Just name the summit in the snow on the left. Easy! The names of all correct entrants will be drawn from the Chairman's Herdwick Tweed Hat at the August Committee meeting.

One bottle of good wine will go to the winner.

Answers by email or post to the Editor before 29th July.

Oh, here are some clues. They might help:

This summit has a special significance in the UK.

A race to the top and back has been held every year since 1951. It is often visited on charity fund-raising 'challenges'.

There are an estimated 100,000 ascents per year.

There is a shelter on the summit, and the ruins of a former building.



# The Day that the Rains Came Down

*Baugh Fell from Rawthey*

*D. Birkett*

08.00 hrs, 29th March, 2011. I left home hoping to take advantage of the last good day of weather, frosty mornings, with guaranteed sunshine and light airs. The weatherman warned of 'a chance of afternoon showers', so hence the early start. I had chosen to visit less frequented fells east of the Howgills - Baugh Fell is a great 'whale back' of a mountain with Garsdale to the south, Ravenstonedale to the north and Mallerstang to the east.

The 'old road' part of the A683 at Burnt Mill gave secluded parking. I left the main road on a footpath at Ghyllas house where a large herd of Alpacas reside, strangely out of keeping beasts but no doubt suited to our climate. Having safely negotiated 'Alpaca country' I joined a lane leading to Hebblethwaite Hall, a milk tanker trundled by before I reached the steadings. Builders were converting a barn, no doubt for 'local housing (I think not); farm workers charged up a track on quad bikes - the 'Hall' stood silent enveloped in a 'holiday home air'. I retraced my steps in search of a footpath leading to Hebblethwaite Hall woodland, this was a pleasant surprise set in a deep gorge and in the care of The Woodland Trust, one of the champions of the recent government woodland sale climb down. The little used path climbed steeply out of the gorge and developed into a broad engineered track leading to Sarthwaite, a farm in apparent good order but currently unused.

The good views of the Howgills had all but been overcome by an advancing wet mist; the nearby views into the upper limestone gorge remained attractive. I headed for a bridleway gate on the outer fell wall which displayed an 'open access 1' sign and emerged onto the vast fellside. An overgrown track led to a ford at Far Gill Laid where I followed a more obvious quad bike track on the northern bank of Near Gill Laid with its numerous small cascades in a mudstone depression. Skylarks noisily announced my arrival, in the distance a curlew gave a haunting call. The walk had developed into a plod over rank vegetated moorland, pathless and wet, with

only three cairns on the sky line to aim for.

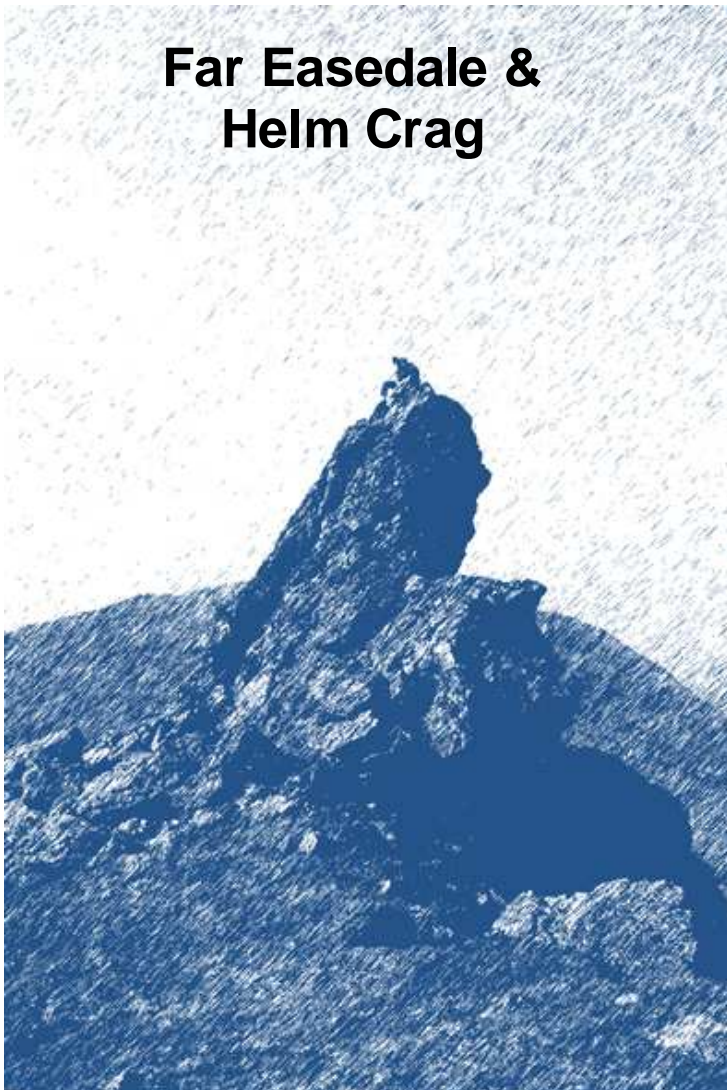
As Spring was just emerging in the uplands, only the common yellow sedge broke the monotony of the mat grass (*Nardus Stricta*) desert. By now more persistent rain was falling, two thirds up the fell, the thought of full water proofs was not appealing, but needs must.

Head-down and determined I emerged on the plateau of Baugh Fell near the three cairns and viewed West Baugh Fell tarn lying at\* 630m, a desolate and slightly eerie place in the swirling mist. The plateau rises gently over intermittent stony areas and peat covered sections before passing wind blown peat hags alongside a shallow quarried area. Some of the rocks had patches of lichen (*Cladonia Floerkeana*) with greenish/grey stalks headed with bright red fruiting bodies. The rock was presumably used to build the fine wall that traverses the full length of Baugh Fell on its southern flank. Knoutberry Haw (676m) has a trig, point in situ, though the map shows Tarn Rigg Hill at 2m higher. By now the rain was constant, the only saving grace: it was calm. I perched on a stone through slab and ate my butties, I was still suffering having over indulged at Morley, when Kendal won 36-27, a very entertaining match, a combination of Thwaites beer, chips and onions did the damage - when will I learn!

On descending the fell you couldn't get lost if you tried, just follow the wall alongside Ringing Keld Gutter, which bubbles and sings as you cross the spongy terrain. A pair of Golden Plover flew ahead of at one point, their plaintive cry is heard before you see them. At Faw Moor a track heads for Dovecote Gill and Dowbiggin, I should have joined the road but instead opted for a muddy track leading to Fellgate farm, I was relieved to arrive at the steading and join the sunken access lane. The trees on the steep sided lane had been expertly laid, I picked my way down the uneven surface, the 'weather' was starting to get into my gear so I was pleased to join the road at Greenwood and so to my trusty steed.

The day was finished off in a delightful cafe in Sedbergh, opposite the church, quaffing copious amounts of tea and reflecting on a grand day on the hills.

## Far Easedale & Helm Crag



### Mid-week Walk No. 13

Wednesday 13th April 2011

Jean and Fred Underhill, Irene and Graham Ramsbottom, Sue Mitchell and Tony Maguire, Clare Fox, Roger Atkinson, Ray Wood

*Fred Underhill*

The forecast said rain and it did rain and rain and rain and it was still raining when 6 members left Kendal Bus station, collecting Roger and then Irene and Graham in Staveley. In Grasmere, a quick comfort stop and then at 11.05 am off up to Far Easedale.

The mist was well down and the rain incessant. The young lambs in the first field sheltered under their mothers or by the wall side.

Good progress was made and we regrouped at the bridge. Wainwright states that "Far Easedale is wet underfoot, always" and today was a good example. A lunch stop was made just by the waterfalls, taking what shelter there was from the driving rain.

Onwards and upwards to the old fence at the head of Easedale, meeting with several 'Coast to Coast' walkers heading towards Grasmere over 1½ miles away - at least all downhill from there.

We stopped to look over to the 'Coast to Coast' path, just visible through the mist and rain - Ray is walking the C to C in a few weeks time - and then we turned onto the ridge path and into the driving rain.

The path passed under the summit of Calf Crag, with the mist occasionally clearing to give a brief view of the valley and the ridge path ahead.

Half way along the ever undulating path and in thicker mist, the track appeared to be heading down into the valley. Had we missed the main path? After a brief detour and a look at the map, we carried on down the path we were on.

Very wet and muddy, we eventually reached the summit of Helm Crag. Photos were quickly taken then down to Grasmere to arrive at 4.30. The next bus was at 4.55 and so there was no time for the usual tea and cakes.

We caught the bus home and it was still raining when we got to Kendal. Several members said, "I bet it's a good view down the valley on a fine day."

It seems I've heard that comment before.



## THE WELSH HUT MEET *The LCCC Hut, Blaenau Ffestiniog 15th - 17th April 2011*



Alan, Colin, Bill, Alec, Mark, Peter, Cheryl, Jason, (the Ed behind the camera and Walter off exploring)

*With the prospect of a good weekend based in Blaenau ahead, I decided to set off early - on Tuesday in fact. I'd asked Colin Hobday for a key to the Oread Hut in Rhyd Ddu and it had arrived promptly by post so off I went. [Note that you can do that too, through our reciprocal rights arrangement with Oread]*

*I had a brilliant 3 days: A 3-star scramble on the Llech Ddu spur of the huge menacing Black Ladders cliffs took me to the 3,426 ft. summit of Carnedd Dafydd in the sunshine on Tuesday afternoon. Then a start from the Pen-y Gwryd Hotel (worth the price of a coffee to savour the mountaineering history on its walls) on the eastern end of the Glyders ridge on a wet Wednesday tested my navigation skills. More climbing history on the walls of Pete's Eats (another coffee) in Llanberis set me up on Thursday for a wander over a circuit of peaks including the fine 3,029 ft. summit of Elidir Fawr. My wide-ranging wanderings were all done comfortably from the Oread hut, shared this time with two members of the Alpine Club so I had good company too - and all for £4.50 a night!*

Fine weather on Friday morning saw me making the short journey to Blaenau with a light heart. My spirits began to sink, however, when I explored the town. Shops and pubs were boarded up and there was a distinct sense that this was a town without hope. Cheryl and Jason arrived and there was no time for despondency - we explored instead the LCCC hut. It's a little terraced miner's cottage (front door on the far left of the photo above) and exploration lasted all of 30 seconds. Roomy for two but for a dozen (as advertised) it was decidedly snug. The Smallwoods went climbing on Clogwyn yr Oen

(Slack, a starred Severe, if I remember correctly) and I wandered up the old quarry road to tick off a couple of minor 2,000 foot hills above the ruined quarry village of Rhosydd. The tops were delightful but I wasn't so keen on the jolt I got as I stepped over an unmarked electric fence!

Everyone arrived as the day progressed and we all fitted in, nice and cosy. There was a wood-burning stove to give the promise of cheery evenings ahead and everyone smiled as we tumbled over each other in the single small kitchen/living/dining space (about the size of High House kitchen!) trying to cook our respective meals. Once we were fed, there was one more item on the agenda to resolve for the weekend. I had passed the nearest pub that morning but it had looked abandoned - door closed, windows dark and dirty. We set off for it, more in hope than in expectation. It was open and, once we were installed, it was fine. Then the free sandwiches came round and the place began to fill. Locals chatted to us and it began to feel like Thursday night at the Rifleman's Arms. Once the beer (the aptly named 'Mad Trumpet' by the Tetley Brewery) had kicked in it was better than fine - it was brilliant. We walked home along the railway line, all of us thinking that all was well with the world.

Saturday morning saw our crags, only minutes away from the cottage, obscured by low cloud and the threat of rain. We hesitated for a while and then decided to wander up the road anyway for a look. The Smallwoods peeled off for Craig yr Wrysgan and the classic White Streak/Honeysuckle Corner, then Alan, Bill and the Ed stopped at Clogwyn yr Oen for Kirkus's Climb (followed by Chic), while Peter and (recent convert to cragging) Alec headed off up into the mist in search of Clogwyn y Bustach. Colin, recovering from injury, tested himself with a run over the Moelwyns but Mark, coming to terms with injury, was unable to stay with him and had to be content with a short but painful outing. Walter went in search of derelict mines to disappear into.

The climbers were rewarded for their optimism. The clouds broke and lifted slowly (revealing Moelwyn Bach, the crags and quarry road - left) and everyone returned to the hut at the end of the day satisfied with their successes. After eating, Walter showed us his secret way, across the hillside, to the pub. Another night on the Mad Trumpet ensued, a night which probably surpassed the previous one. I can't quite remember.

Sunday was warm and sunny and we scattered again for one last route before heading home. The Smallwoods repeated a route from last year's Welsh Meet, Asahel - because it was so good, and the Ed introduced Al and Bill to the delectable route (guidebook description) of Africa Rib. Peter and Alec, I think, climbed Chic. Then, alas, it was time to go home.







### Shinscrapers on the crags of Blaenau Ffestiniog, 2011

Above left: Bill Hogarth demonstrating a bit of traditional back-and-footing in the deep-cut chimney on the 1st pitch of Kir kus' Climb, Clogwyn yr Oen. 16th April  
Above right: Alan Wilson leads the 1st pitch of the 'delectable route' of Africa Rib, Craig y Clipiau. 17th April .

## CLIMBING (and WALKING) FOR ALL

### Hutton Roof

Thursday 28th April 2011

*The Shinscrapers had had a trial run at Hutton Roof on the previous Thursday and, having established that the rock was all still in place and hadn't quite been polished into oblivion, they were all excited at the prospect of the opening of the 'Climbing for All' 2011 Summer Season.*

*The 28th came. The weather was good. The crag and the climbers waited but only a handful turned up to monkey about on Gorilla Buttress and all the other delights there. A small turnout but that didn't matter. Those who were there played and had fun. Meanwhile, the Secretary had other plans:*

When planning the Social Calendar we thought what a good idea it would be to combine the first Climbing for All evening on Hutton Roof with a walk for the non-climbers. This would provide a good opportunity for the climbers and non-climbers to get together at the end of the walk and even try a little climb if anyone felt the urge. Yes a very good idea .....the only question is 'where were you all?'

Six Fellfarers, Irene, Graham, Kath, Mike, Mick and myself, turned up at the Church at Old Hutton on a delightfully sunny Thursday evening. We made our way, on the public footpath to Hutton Crags, through the woods with the delicious smell of wild garlic in the air. There was a profusion of blossom everywhere and one unidentified one which was particularly beautiful and abundant caught our eye. We learnt later (thanks to Mike's detective skills) the tree is called Bird Cherry and thrives on limestone areas.

At the end of the woods we climbed over the stile and turned right onto the Limestone Link path. Just on a little way and the climbers, Mick and Mike, said goodbye as they headed left up towards the crag carrying their heavy rucksacs and hoping to meet up with more shinscrapers.

We headed off on our walk and Kath confided to us that she spent a lot of her time walking on Hutton Roof and knew the area very well. This was very useful information for the walk leader who had to

resort to her navigational skills on one or two occasions, (thank you Kath). We took the well worn path with wonderful views of the Howgill hills and Lakeland Fells in the distance and Farleton Knott looming ahead. It was a lovely evening lots of blue sky, white clouds and clear views. However a slight chill in the air reminded us that it was still only April.

A couple of weeks ago Mick and I did the walk and I made some notes of landmarks to look out for so as we strode on I was busy looking for one of them, a tank on wheels. It became a bit of a treasure hunt but it eventually appeared and this was my cue to turn sharp left. This left turn led us through a winding tree and gorse tunnel; this area is called Uberash Plain on the map.

We continued on this path passing then through hazel woods with a large crag (not The Crag!) to our right. We arrived at some boulders which led us into a clearing with a Y junction. Consulting my instructions (and checking with Kath) we bore left which took us through another tree lined corridor and into a clearing with limestone pavement much in evidence. We were rewarded with views again and found we had nearly reached the ridge line. We kept left on the path with views of farmland in the distance. Making our way up hill we soon spotted Hutton Roof Crag and when we had the Crag directly in view to our right we made our way over to it. It looked very busy with climbers and soon we spotted our 'gang of eight' all enjoying themselves on the Crag. Naturally we stopped to chat and enjoy a 'catch up' on all the news and have a short rest too!

During the walk we were rewarded with sightings of early purple flowering orchids and exquisite bunches of violets and primroses nestling in the limestone. The gorse was in bloom (does it bloom all year?) and there was blossom in abundance. What a very pretty time of year. I even heard my first cuckoo!

There was a definite chill in the air and us walkers agreed to re-trace our steps back to the Church make our way home with Mike. We left Mick, Bill, Janne, Sarah, Peter, Frank and Alan to finish off their climbing and make their way home, some via the Riflemen I believe!

We all agreed it was a walk worth repeating, maybe next year? Watch this space!

Clare Fox

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# SETTLE to CARLISLE by TRAIN

Saturday 7th May 2011



*There we were, tickets bought, cash handed over - everyone here but Bill and June Mary. Clare had instructed everyone to be half an hour early. 10 minutes to go but where were they?*

*...9 minutes to go and they appeared. They had been on time, but at Giggleswick, not Settle. Silly Billy. Never mind, relax now...*

Twenty four had booked seats and, two having to drop out because of illness, 22 boarded the train to find... 20 seats allocated for us! Never mind, 2 kind fellows who were getting off at the next stop gave up their seats for us. The power that comes with the mention of "K Fellfarers"! We were settled in then, with time to look around: some faces welcome but rarely seen, Ruth Joyce and Robin, Tom and Lucy Peat, and two little future Fellfarers to keep the carriage lively. Leo and Billie Jane. These two had only met minutes before on the platform but by the time the train slid silently out of the station they were the best of friends.

Twenty members of the Club did this journey in 1995 (when a coach was hired to transport us between Kendal and Settle) and I remember that, although I was attentive to the scenery then, most of it was unknown territory. How long does it take to learn a landscape? I had then been in Kendal about 10 years and had barely discovered the more subtle beauty of Yorkshire - I still looked Lakewards. Now, though, I was able to follow the journey because every window view now had a personal story for me - caves, climbs, walks, runs, races. I tried to turn off the conversations around me to best savour the memories now locked, for me, into the scenery (a sweet irony - the denial of present experience in favour of past experience - what would I remember of this journey - perhaps nothing except the remembering). As it happened, Leo and Billie Jane, gaining confidence now, and volume, as their friendship progressed, ensured that no-one in the carriage would let their thoughts wander for long, bless 'em!

There was a growing expectancy, palpable within the carriage, as we neared Ribbleshead and its (yes, I am using the word correctly here) iconic viaduct, followed by a sense of disappointment as we rumbled across the top of it. It has to be said: the 2nd worst possible place to view the Ribbleshead Viaduct is from the train crossing it. The worst place is probably Milton Keynes. There isn't even a sense of height from the top of those magnificent arches - Yorkshire just looks a tad lower than it did 5 minutes before.

Never mind, the anticlimax was soon forgotten as better stuff unfolded; the two short viaducts above Dentdale give better scenery than Ribbleshead. As we pulled into Dent station I couldn't resist repeating the probably apocryphal story about the perplexed city gent on holiday in the Dales who asked a local man in Dent why they had built the station so far from the village. "Well now," the local replied, " 'appen they wanted it near t'railway line." I think they tell the same tale at

Kirkby Stephen station too.

All too soon we were running under the great wall of the northern Pennines, brooding over the delightful ruddy sandstone villages of the Eden valley, villages which now seem to be sprouting estates of commuter housing, boxes rendered acceptable to planners by the use of cheap ersatz vernacular details and inhabited by people who....

*[stop this rant right now - Fellfarers don't want to hear this grumpy old architect nonsense. Ed]*

We entered the outskirts of Carlisle, scruffy around the railway line, but what city isn't?

We arrived and Alec, who mans the Club's Barrow outpost, greeted us on the platform, having travelled the West Cumbria Coast Line to join us. Carlisle proclaims itself to be "The Great Border City" and seems to ignore the fact that it's the only Border City, but never mind, there's much to see and do there and the 4 hours we had is not nearly enough to sample more than a couple of things. Some visited the castle, some the cathedral or Tullie House, some went shopping.

I'd hoped to conduct a personal tour, for anyone interested, of the Guildhall (Cumbria's only medieval timber-framed building), built c 1400, which I'd had the privilege of restoring back in the '80s, but it was closed! Maybe next time, eh?

Nobody got lost in Carlisle and nobody got drunk so at 4 pm we gathered again on the platform for the journey home.

*The journey was just like the morning's - but going the other way.*

The Secretary had asked for numbers who were dining at the end of the day (to reserve tables) but most members had 'kept their options open' and not replied so when a dozen Fellfarers tried the local pubs in Settle we were turned away. Those inns serving food seemed to be doing very well and had no room for us. Others were shut and boarded up. Troubling times for aficionados of the English alehouse.

We ended up in the Marton Arms, once ignored by Fellfarers on account of the high prices and its popularity with hungry day-trippers. On this Saturday evening, however, it was deserted and the impressive array of 20+ beer pumps had most of their labels turned round to indicate no beer. The young Polish couple now running the pub were eager to please and we felt very welcome, despite the limited choice of beer and, let's be honest, poor menu. The Marton Arms, like many others, has fallen on hard times.





# From *Scream Point* to *Beckmickle Ing* and back again

## An Evening Walk

Tuesday 17th May 2011

Krysia Niepokojczycka, Margaret and Roger Atkinson, Sandra Atkinson, Sue Mitchell and Tony Maguire, David Birkett, Frank Haygarth, Tony Walshaw, Clare and Mick Fox



The little loop of old road just south of Plantation Bridge was the meeting point chosen by Krysia for the first summer evening walk of 2011. Why is the turn-off there named Scream Point?

*Before you computer buffs rush to your keyboards, I can tell you that none of the 51,600,000 results from putting "Scream Point" into Google tells us the origin of the name. But I digress....*

The day had been dim and damp, the sky a dark billowing mass of cloud, bellies of vapour in every shade from dark grey to very dark grey bulged earthwards, catching the treetops on the flanks of Potter Fell and obscuring everything above. Was this walk a good idea?

12 Fellfarers thought it was, including 'seldom seen' Sandra and Tony, all the way from Lancaster and determined to enjoy the slow untying of their bonds of employment. The sunny faces gathered there belied the view upwards and we brought our waterproofs any way.

We waited the traditional 10 minutes for latecomers (there weren't any) and then Krysia led the charge across Rather Heath, southwards to the Crook Road.

The footpath north makes a beeline for Staveley and crosses fields of that most delectable Westmorland scenery—rolling grass punctuated by upthrust craglets of ryolite and banks of fragrant blooming gorse. The hedges were white with thorn blossom and the fields were full of lambs, calves and their mums. The grass was wet with the days rain but the ground beneath was still firm from April's baking in the sun. The leader strode on at a good pace and we followed, chatting on the inexhaustible range of topics: holidays, boots, weather, ailments, grandchildren, furniture, times



gone by, other Fellfarers...

We passed beneath a tiny face of rock underneath Ashes Coppice and I remembered the last time a group of Fellfarers passed this way; when the leader of a walk from The Rifleman's Arms to The Watermill at Ings set off an hour before the rest of us because he'd forgotten to check the time in *The Fellfarer*. Then, one member walked the whole route with an umbrella over his head and we all wished we had had the same foresight. We had stopped under this crag and the sheltering branches above for a 'smoke-stop'. Today there was no stopping, however, and we were soon dashing across the Staveley by-pass and the rail crossing to drop to the meanderings of the River Kent, alternately sliding serene and grey and then tumbling over little rocky outcrops and mossy roots on its way to the sea. Beckmickle Ing, on the far bank, is one of the last local strongholds of the red squirrel, Tony informed us. We saw none tonight but we know that the wood's display of bluebells was incomparable only a couple of weeks ago when three of the Shinscrapers

deserted the crags and rambled here.

The threat of rain became a reality and waterproofs went on as we strolled across the meadows (left) which were now filled with 'fairies' waiting to fly - dandelion clocks - in what seems to have been a very good year for them. Watch out next year, you gardeners. The rain was never more than a fine spray, though, and by the time we reached Cowan Head it had stopped. The best thing that can be said about

Cowan Head is that most of the time no-one knows it's there. Opinions were divided as we walked past the towering walls of luxury apartments and garaging for the Mercs and Porsches there.



Uphill then, away from the Kent, to a delightful set of lanes (above), filled with heady scents of various blossoms, a bridge across the railway, and a sprint back across the A591 to our cars.

The evening was rounded off nicely with a pint, just the one, in The Jolly Anglers.

### Living Will

Last night, my kids and I were sitting in the living room and I said to them, "I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug." They got up, unplugged the computer and threw out my wine, the little sods!

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# Reservoirs and Corpses

## Mid-week Walk No. 14

Wednesday 25th May 2011

Irene and Graham Ramsbottom, Margaret and Roger Atkinson, Val and Colin Hunter, Frank Haygarth, Mick Fox.

Only 24 hours earlier I had watched hailstones piling up in my garden as a huge storm passed through. Was that an indication of what we might expect on this walk? The morning promised something better though, with some patches of blue sky showing between the racing clouds overhead. We could certainly expect some buffeting from the wind but otherwise the weather was set to behave itself.

We gathered below Bewbarrow Crag, at the 'entrance' to Swindale, and climbed the little track which winds over the Rosgill Moor and then drops into the tiny secretive valley of Naddle.

The path continued beyond Naddle Farm, through delectable woodland where drifts of bluebells were still in perfect bloom, and joined the Haweswater road just below the dam.

A short spell of walking on tarmac led us to the permissive path squeezed into the little wooded strip between the lake's southern shore and the road.

We poked about the little boathouse which, with its steep railed slipway, must have been an emergency station during the flooding of the valley in the 1930s, and then found a comfortable little spot on the shore for 'elevenses' (below).



Have you walked this way? The path is delightful. It threads through little patches of woodland and occasional open banks where bracken is just thrusting forth, always only a few feet above the Haweswater shore. Bluebells (blue and white), primroses, tomentil, ramsons, foxgloves, thyme, herb robert and red campion were the obvious species spotted by our group of enthusiastic but (let's be honest) fairly ignorant botanists as we passed below the cyclopean blocks of stone used to support the Mardale road. The name of one familiar blue flower eluded us then but I think it was 'bugle'.

The views ahead, towards the craggy flanks of the High Street ridge where impressive rocky ridges thrust down towards the lake shore, improved as we progressed (bottom).

Our lunch stop gave us the opportunity to study the great craggy corrie of Whelter Bottom on the opposite shore. It's a lonely remote

place but was once inhabited - there are traces of an ancient fort on the rocky knoll at its southern edge.

A mile further along the lakeshore we left the path, climbed steeply up to the road and stepped onto the Old Corpse Road.

Most Fellfarers will know that the village of Mardale Green which was flooded when the Haweswater dam was built in the 1930s did not have consecrated ground for the burial of its dead. When a resident died there, the body was taken by horseback over the fell to Swindale and then on to Shap for burial. The practice ceased in 1736 when the Holy Trinity church and cemetery were built in Mardale Green but the name of the route remains. (see also the note at the bottom of page 19). It is difficult nowadays to imagine the conditions in the valleys that rendered this route over the boggy flanks of Selside Pike the best way to get to Shap (below).



The climb delivers good views of the startlingly beautiful tumbling cascades of Hopgill Beck and Rowantreethwaite Beck. Frank remembered enjoying some good scrambling there many years ago. Some exploration of the old ruined huts above High Loup left us wondering about their purpose. They are too numerous and were too close to Mardale Green to be shelters for funeral corteges. They are small and have no fireplaces and so were unlikely to have been dwellings. They were soundly built and were roofed with substantial slates. Colin had the most likely explanation - that they were hiding places for the villagers when Border Reivers came calling - but later research (Google) revealed that the generally accepted view is that they were peat-drying huts. Now you know.

Once the steep haul uphill was over, easy walking eastwards opened up views of Swindale and a wonderful panorama of one of the Shinscrapers' favourite play grounds - Gouthier Crag.

The Old Corpse Road drops down to Swindale Head farm, busy with Swaledale ewes and lambs, and from there we could stride out on the last two miles of tarmac to our waiting cars.

We were too late for the excellent teas in Bampton and indeed for the café in Shap so, once again, the Midweekers had to forego the traditional mid-week pot of tea to end the day. Never mind, it had been a great walk, full of contrasts and amid wonderful scenery. Thank you to Irene and Graham for sharing it.





### Avian News

The HighHouse Tawny Owls have bred again this year, and there are 3 chicks. The biggest, and first to appear, could be seen (at the time of writing) every day sitting serenely (or dozily?) amongst the leaves waiting for nightfall and for mum bringing food. The Editor's rather poor photo, below, was taken on 31st May while mum watched from a nearby branch (the owl's mum, not the Ed's). The other 2 chicks have since emerged. Other family news includes Redstarts nesting in the stonework under the eaves at High House.

Please remember, if you have any good photographs or reports of wildlife at High House to share, please pass them on to the Editor.



### BMC Grant Success

The BMC set up, a couple of years ago, a fund to provide grants to mountaineering clubs to help them in what they do. There are three headings under which BMC grants can be requested:

1. Training of young members
2. Equipment
3. Websites and Newsletters

Last year the Club applied for a grant to support the publication of the book 'K Fellfarers and High House', under heading 3. The committee knew that its application didn't meet the bid criteria and so was not particularly surprised to hear that its bid was unsuccessful.

This year, however, things have changed. Our move to a new printer for this newsletter has highlighted the need for the Editor to upgrade his computer, if only to cut down on the time wasted by him (and the Printer) in trying to sort out the transmission difficulties. So, when the Secretary told the Committee that applications for BMC grants were being invited again this year, our KFF computer expert, Kevin Ford, suggested that the club apply for a grant to buy a new programme to replace the Editor's old copy of Publisher with the more professional programme that we used to create the book. The Committee agreed and the Editor submitted a bid.

The results have just been announced at the time of writing and:

**The BMC has awarded £400 to K Fellfarers to purchase an up-to-date programme for production of its newsletter.**

It's nice to get some recognition from the BMC and it should mean that in future:

1. Photographs in *The Fellfarer* will be much clearer.
2. The Editor will be a lot less stressed whenever you meet him.

## Social Sub-committee News

*"Here we are on the cusp of the hottest and driest summer since records began. As I write this I am sitting in a hotel room in Ipswich! After a great start to spring we have had the usual May rains but despite this the Social Committee are optimistic about the coming months and hope you enjoy the events planned."*

*We are currently considering key events for 2012 including away meets and the possibility of bringing back the Ceilidh in the New Year. There have also been submissions for a change to one of the ATTT stages for New Years Day!*

*The new Social Calendar, introduced in the previous Fellfarer, has been well received so we will continue with the revised format.*

*Well that will do from me, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Peter, Clare, Bill or myself for feedback and ideas for future events.*

*Many thanks and enjoy the events."* Jason

### Windermere Water Weekend - 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> July

Up to press we have 18 people committed to joining us at the Water weekend which should make for an equally successful weekend as last year. There are a few more pitches available and booking is essential through Jason. It is also possible for 'day visitors' to join in the fun; again contact Jason for details

### Borrowdale Fell Race - 6<sup>th</sup> August

We are, again, marshalling for this year's fell race and would appreciate your support for this vitally important event in the valley's calendar (not to mention the free breakfast and tickets to the dance!). Peter Goff will be co-coordinating, as usual, so please contact him to put your name down.

### Ingleborough Photograph Walk - Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September

The walk is to provide Club photographers with the opportunity to compete in one of the categories of the KFF Photography Competition (see below. If you require more info. please call Bill Hogarth)

### Heathy Lea Away Meet - 9-10<sup>th</sup> September

KFF make a return visit to the Oread's Heathy Lea Cottage this year after a couple of year's absence. The cottage is in Baslow, Derbyshire, lies on the edge of the Chatsworth estate and is the ideal base to visit a number of gritstone edges and plenty of beautiful walks. The Robin Hood pub is a 5 minute walk up the road. Spaces are limited so please contact Jason to book a place.

### Kalymnos Away Meet - 21- 28<sup>th</sup> September

The 2011 Annual Climbing Meet is on the Greek island of Kalymnos. The island boasts hundreds of sports routes only a short distance from hotel accommodation with some good walking and plenty of sun and sea. Travelling involves a flight to Kos and 45 minute ferry to the Island. Cheryl Smallwood has the details for anyone interested.

### The 2011 KFF Photography Competition

The Club's Winter Programme of Slideshows has revealed a wealth of creative talent amongst its photographers and the Social Sub-committee thought that a competition might be fun:

Members are invited to send in printed copies of eligible photographs to Bill Hogarth (see page 2f or Bill's address). There are 5 categories:

1. Mountain Scenery
2. People on the Fells
3. Humour
4. A Day on Ingleborough (see above)
5. Open (any subject)

The photographs can have been taken at any time in the past but must have been taken by the entrant.

Photographs should be printed (no email entries please) at 4 x 6 ins or A5 size and have the members name and category entered written on the back. Entries are limited to three photographs in each category.

**The closing date for entries is 30th September.**

An independent professional photographer will be invited to judge winners in each category. All the entries will be displayed at an **Exhibition Evening in November** and all those members who attend will be asked to vote for an Overall Winner. Prizes will be awarded on the night to the 5 category winners and the overall winner. There will be other amusements during the evening.

Photographs submitted can be collected by entrants after the evening event or include a stamped addressed envelope with your entry for return by post.

### Do you know what happened to Mardale church when it was demolished in 1935?

Much of the interior was used in a new church in Carlisle but one of the windows (arched and leaded) was built into the draw-off tower in Haweswater and can still be seen from the shore (GR 479 131).

The Jacobean pulpit is now in use in St Andrew's church in... Stonethwaite, Borrowdale!



# KFF CLUB EVENTS JULY - OCTOBER 2011

Where the contact person's phone numbers are not given here, full contact details can be found on page 2

Events marked with an \* asterix are described in more detail on page 19

## July

**Weekend 1-2nd**

*(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 5th. Social evening 9 pm onwards)*

**High House** - KFF Club booking for the weekend

**Weekend 8-9th**

**\*Away Meet** - Walter's Windermere Water Weekend. Lakeside Camping. (GR 401 992) £5 pppn. Booking essential. Info: Jason Smallwood

**Tue 19th**

**Evening Walk** - The Environs of Beetham

Meet 6.30 pm at Heron Corn Mill car park (GR 494 800). Info: Peter Goff - 01524 736990

**Wed 20th**

**Midweek Walk** - The Dunnerdale Horseshoe. Distance 5 miles. **Note change of date**

Meet 11 am at The Blacksmiths Arms, Broughton Mills (GR 222 905). Info: Mick Fox

**26-29th**

**Provisional week for work on Ladies washroom.** Volunteers needed: Info: Mick Fox

**Weekend 29-30th**

**High House** - Start of KFF Club booking for the **whole of August**

**Every Thursday**

*Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Bill Hogarth*

## August

**1st - 31st**

*(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>. Social evening 9 pm onwards)*

**High House** - KFF Club booking for the whole of August

**Sat 6th**

**\*Borrowdale Fell Race** - Marshals needed at check points (2 no. at each) at Bessyboot, Esk Hause, Scafell Pike, Great Gable, Honister Pass and Dalehead. Names to: Peter Goff - 01524 736990

**Tues 9th**

**Evening walk** -

Meet 6.30 pm at the lay-by on A6 (just north of Levens Bridge). Info: Peter Goff - 01524 736990

**Wed 17th**

**Midweek walk** - Clapham, North Yorkshire. Distance 8 miles. A circular walk, undulating in nature.

Meet 10.30 am on Church Avenue (GR 745 693). Info: Tony Maguire - 01539 737033

**Sat 20th**

**Walk** - The Fairfield Horseshoe. Distance 10.5 miles. Ascent 3,430 ft.

Meet 9 am at Daisy's Café, Market Cross, Ambleside (GR 376 045). Info: Bill Hogarth

**Every Thursday**

*Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Bill Hogarth*

## September

**Sat 3rd**

*(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup>. Social evening 9 pm onwards)*

**\*Afternoon walk** - Ingleborough. Distance 5 miles approx.

Meet 12 noon at the Crina Bottom track junction with the B6255 just outside Ingleton (GR 702 731)

Bring your camera - to be followed by a photographic competition! Info: Bill Hogarth

**Weekend 9-10th**

**\*Away Meet** - Heathy Lee Hut Meet, Baslow, Derbyshire.

£4.50 pppn for members and £6 for guests. Booking essential. Info: Jason Smallwood

**Wed 14th**

**Midweek Walk** - Pen-y-Ghent from Horton in Ribblesdale. 6 miles.

Meet at 10.30am at Horton Bridge (GR811 721). Free parking nearby. Info: Roger Atkinson

**Thurs 15th**

Last 'Climbing for All' meet outside unless we have an Indian summer!!

We will then revert to climbing indoors at Kendal Wall (meet at 7 pm)

**Weekend 16-17th**

**High House** - Working Weekend and the Borrowdale Show (Sunday pm)

**Week 21-28th**

**\*Away Meet** - Climbing/hotel trip to Kalymnos, Greece. Info: Jason Smallwood

**Every Thursday**

*Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Bill Hogarth*  
*See note above - Thurs 15th.*

## October

**Sat 15th**

*(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 4th. Social evening 9 pm onwards)*

**Walk** - Details in the next newsletter

**Tues 18th**

**Slide show** - Details in the next newsletter

Meet 7.30 pm at The Strickland Arms,Sizergh. Sandwiches provided. Guests welcome.

**Week 21-27th**

**High House** - KFF Club booking - Half Term

**Wed 26th**

**Midweek Walk** - The Glendermackin Valley and Souther Fell. Distance 5.5 miles.

Meet 10:30 am. Mungrisdale village (GR 364 303). Plenty of parking. Info: Colin Hunter - 01539 730177

**Every Thursday**

*Evening Climbing for All. Kendal Wall. 7 pm onwards. Everyone welcome. Info: Bill Hogarth*