

Issue No. 65
April 2012

the FellFarer





Editorial

So, another AGM marks another year passing in the life of the club and the recent personnel changes to the Committee are recorded on this and the opposite pages.

I believe that the willingness of members to step forward and put time into managing the club is a healthy sign, as is the readiness of people to contribute to the Website and Newsletter, to share in words and pictures their experiences within, and outside of, club activities.

I know that not all members share the view that their own privately organised trips, walks and other events should be shared with others and that is of course their right.

But what do others think? I have often included accounts of my own experiences when I think it might be of interest to members. Indeed I've done so in this issue. Am I right to do so? Do members think that the Website, Newsletter (and indeed Slideshows) should be limited strictly to 'Club Events'? It's of genuine concern so please let me know.

Anyway, in the hope that I'm getting it about right, I offer you this latest issue. I hope you enjoy it - and thank you to all the contributors.

Ed.

Cover Photograph:

The 2011 ATTT Champion in battle dress
Colin Jennings on New Years Eve - see pages 8-9

Deadline for contributions for the next *Fellfarer* -

May 31st 2012

OUR PARTNERS

- BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL
BMC Website: www.thebmc.co.uk
Each Fellfarer has an individual Membership Number

- RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION
Ramblers Website: www.ramblers.org.uk
Fellfarers RA Membership Number: 1273727

- OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
(Reciprocal Rights Partnership)
Oread Website: www.oread.co.uk

Oread huts are available to Fellfarers at the following rates:

Tan-y-Wyddfa
Rhyd-Ddu,
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O.S. Grid Ref. 570527

Fellfarers: £4.50 p.p.p.n., Guests: £7.50 p.p.p.n.

Heathy Lea Cottage
Baslow,
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Fellfarers: £4.00 p.p.p.n., Guests: £6 p.p.p.n.

Oread Booking Secretary: Colin Hobday
28, Cornhill
Allestree
Derby
DE22 2FS
Tel: 01332 551594
email: hutbookings@oread.co.uk



CLUB OFFICIALS

PRESIDENT:	Gordon Pitt	Tel: 015395 68210
VICE PRESIDENT:	Roger Atkinson	Tel: 01539 732490
TRUSTEES	Vicky Atkinson Mick Fox Cheryl Smallwood Mark Walsh	Tel: 07971 408378 Tel: 01539 727531 Tel: 01539 738451 Tel: 01606 891050
COMMITTEE		
Chairman:	Roger Atkinson	Tel: 01539 732490 198, Burnside Road Kendal LA96EB email: fratkinson@hotmail.co.uk
Vice Chairman:	Mark Walsh	Tel: 01606 891050 20, Knutsford Road Antrobus Northwich Cheshire CW9 6JW email: mark-walsh@tiscali.co.uk
Secretary:	Clare Fox	Tel: 01539 727531 50, Gillinggate Kendal LA94JB email: clarefox50@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Val Calder	Tel: 01539727109 86, Vicarage Drive Kendal LA95BA email: valcalder@hotmail.co.uk
Booking Secretary:	Hugh Taylor	Tel: 01524 762067 Briarcliffe Carr Bark Road Carr Bark Milnthorpe Cumbria LA77LE email: jhugh.taylor@btinternet.com
Social Secretary:	Mike Palk	Tel: 01524 736548 18, Oxford Street Camforth Lancs LA5 9LG email: mike.palk@toucan.com
Newsletter Editor:	Mick Fox	Tel: 01539 727531 50, Gillinggate Kendal LA94JB email: michaelfox50@hotmail.com
Committee Members:		
	Janne Greasley	Tel: 01539 737581
	Alec Reynolds	Tel: 01229 821099
	Robert Walsh	Tel: 07769 588601
	Tony Walshaw	Tel: 015395 52491
Club Archivist:	Fred Underhill	Tel: 01539 727480

OTHER INFORMATION

Seathwaite Farm (Emergencies only) Tel: 017687 77284
K Fellfarers Club Website: www.kfellfarers.co.uk
High House Website: www.k-fellfarers.co.uk
High House (and fam) Postcode: **CA12 5XJ**
High House OS ref: (Explorer OL4) GR 235119

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Some back issues are available on request from the Editor

Annual General Meeting 2012

The AGM was conducted without controversy and the following are some of the facts and figures reported at that meeting:

- Two years ago there were great concerns about **membership numbers** soaring and the AGM agreed a limit of 150 members. The fears have proved to be groundless and the current membership stands at 135.
- The recent revision to the **Membership Application Form** and the trial of a probationary year was reported (see last issue). The AGM accepted the proposals
- Agreement has been reached with the County Archivist for all of the **Club Archives** to be stored at County Hall. The Club will still retain ownership and control of the archives and will be able to remove them in the future if the Committee feels that it is in the best interest of its members to do so. All Club members and other members of the general public will be able to study the documents at any time.
- Draft proposals of **Improvements to the Fire Escape and Ladies' Washroom at High House Phase II** were distributed, with a request for all comments to be in within 7 days.
- Total **Income over expenditure** for 2011 was £2,765 and at the end of November 2011 the total assets of the Club amounted to £24,354
- **High House** generated £4049.88 income over expenditure.
- The **Club membership** income also exceeded expenditure.
- Some of the income (£1629) from High House and from Club membership was used to underwrite sales of the KFF book which has not yet broken even.
- **Guest night fees** for High House were down this year to £140 from £195 last year and from £389 in 2009. Are there really fewer guests staying at High House?
- The Government **Small Business Rate Scheme** which gives us 100% relief has been extended for a further year (which means that we don't pay any rates at present).
- The **Hut Booking fee** (currently £130 per night) will not increase in 2012 but from 2013 it will increase annually in line with the Consumer Price Index, rounded up or down as appropriate. In 2013 the figure will rise to £135.
- The cost of BMC membership remains at £11.75 per person and the current **membership fee** of £25 will not be increased in 2013.
- After a very poor previous year **Hut Bookings** have returned to something like normal with 106 nights for 2011. Bookings for next year have also improved substantially.
- **Cancellation rates** have reduced too but as a precaution the deposit required has been raised again. It now stands at £40 per night.
- Members are reminded that they can book **mid-week nights** at High House for only £65 per night giving a 50% discount on external groups. Last year this offer was only taken up for 1 night, compared with 5 the previous year.
- There were no new **propositions** or amendments to the Constitution or High House Policy.
- The Chairman gave an address on '**Fellfarers and the next generation**' highlighting the fact that the average age of our membership is now approaching sixty. He felt some optimism about the number of youngsters who now use the Hut. However, he appealed to all Club members to come forward with their ideas and suggestions on how to encourage, recruit and keep new younger members.

Changes to the KFF Committee:

- Bill Hogarth has resigned from his post as Vice-chairman and has been replaced by Mark Walsh.
- Jason Smallwood has resigned from his post of Social Secretary and has been replaced by Mike Pak.
- Kevin Ford has resigned from the Committee.

All of the above changes created three vacancies on the Committee and these have been filled by:

- Janne Greasley
- Robert Walsh
- Tony (Water) Walshaw, who was already a co-opted member.



Janne Greasley



Robert Walsh

New Club Members

Welcome to:



Ellie Woodburn



Nancy Moulin

Moving on

Cheryl and Jason Smallwood (and George) are swapping life in Kendal for a bucolic existence just outside Bakewell in Derbyshire. They still plan to be part of the Club, of course, but they'll be missed in the Auld Grey Town, especially on Thursday nights! Good luck with the move. See also page 19 for details of their farewell bash.

Access Bridge

Reported broken in the last issue and bashed a second time (apparently by the same driver), it was repaired at the March Working Weekend. Full report on the weekend in the next issue.



Windy Gyle

The Cheviots – on the Northumberland and Scottish Border.

September 2011

David Birkett

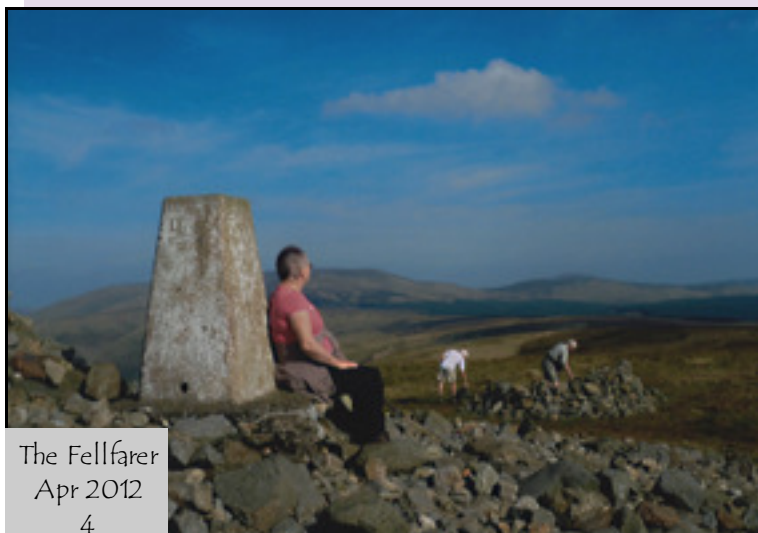
Val and I had planned a late September holiday on the Northumberland coast. Little did we know that we were to be blessed with some of the best weather of the year. Leading up to the 22nd September it had been poor and afterwards, equally miserable. We were staying in self-catering accommodation at Callaly, 5 miles north of Rothbury in rural Northumberland infamous for recent deaths. You cannot visit the County without seeing the Roman Wall. Housesteads is perhaps the most impressive of the Roman Forts, set in a 5 acre site, built by Hadrian in AD 124 having 4 gates, interval towers, barracks, granaries, hospital and of course latrines. The civilian settlement was outside the South gate. Americans and Germans invaded the site while we were there for this is a Mecca for tourists. The whole site is well managed by the N.T. and English Heritage.



We arrived at Callaly after visiting the magnificent Craggside House close by Rothbury and settled into our sumptuous abode. Before heading for the Cheviots we walked in the attractive Simonside Hills and enjoyed a coastal walk from Alnmouth to Craster – smoked kipper country. I was very pleased that Val considered a more challenging fell walk in Upper Coquet valley in the heart of the Cheviots and alongside the vast Otterburn MOD range. You pass the charming villages of Harbottle and Alwinton before parking at the confluences of the Coquet and Rowhope burns; the red flag was flying to the south, to the north we had access. We were to initially follow 'The Street', an ancient drovers road frequented by Reivers (cattle rustlers) in the 18th and 19th Centuries. Nearby is the site of the ancient Slyme Inn (*top left, in fencing*), a notorious drinking den for drovers, farmers and Reivers, no doubt serving whiskey from the several illicit stills in the location.



The walking is relatively easy, being over gradual gradients of grass/peat surfaces, with some similarity of the Howgills but more remote. Few walls are to be seen, hence well maintained fences abound; our first ascent was Hindside Knowe followed by Swinside Law (*middle left, looking towards Windy Gyle*) before descending and climbing to the Black Braes, and traversing to Foul Step – excellent descriptive locations. You have now joined the Pennine Way and a noticeably worn path, at the site of an ancient cairn stood a curious metal post surmounted with a star symbol, we stopped and ate our butties. Two elderly Northumbrian walkers passed by giving a friendly greeting, the final climb to the summit of Windy Gyle (619m) was steep, 7km and 350m ascent from the foot of Rowhope Burn. The trig point affords a fine view with The Cheviot (815m) in a NE direction and in the distance Kirk Yetholm to the NW the end of the Pennine Way. Val posed at the historic Russel's cairn (*bottom left, looking towards the Cheviot*), dedicated to Lord Russel who was responsible for the defence of the central sector of the border in Elizabethan times and was killed on the spot by Scots in 1585.



In my view the Northumberland National Park had got it wrong by erecting a several fingered finger post in this remote location, but that's me. It would be hard to get lost in this locations, just follow a fence – in the right direction of course. We were now well over half-way, before Scotthman's ford we turned for the valley passing Trows Law and a traditional round stone sheepfold. At Trows the farm steading was abandoned in favour of a holiday home, further down the valley at Rowhope the farm looked prosperous, no doubt one had been sacrificed to make the other viable. We followed the road for 2km alongside a bubbling burn, at Dreary sike the gill had been fenced and planted with deciduous trees a welcome sights after the numerous blocks of coniferous stands. Approaching the car I talked with two well-spoken gents, former fellwalkers, now confined to the roads, 'Where have you been?' he asked; 'Windy Gyle' was my reply. 'It's always windy on Windy Gyle, you know. It's too late for a pint in the Slyme Inn' he said with a wry smile.

The Games of the Small Gods

Friday 2nd. December 2011

It was said amongst that league of small gods which has long been known by the cognomen of Kfell-Far-Ers that fully one lustrum as man measures time, and perhaps more, had slipped by unnoticed since they had last played the Games. And so it happened that the council of appointed masters of the Kfell-Far-Ers toiled in thought and, having toiled, decreed that the small gods should meet again in the days when the snows lay and the sun slept long beneath the earth. And that on that meeting they should join battle in Games under the twin watchful gazes of Fate and Chance. It had been many aeons since Skill had been present in these contests and it was no longer in their minds that he should play his part.

The days ran before them and behind them as they went upon their ways and there came a time when winter returned and the nights grew intolerably long, the sunlit hours receding before the dark cloak of Yule. The earth lay black and silent and shivering and not even the death-faced moon cared to cast its baleful light upon the fields and the sorrowful streets when the appointed hour came.

A few solitary Kfell-Far-Ers slipped from the warmth of their homes, coming from humble hearths and from spire-crowned fastnesses. They came from all quarters of the town of their abiding. They gathered as seekers of diversion, delectation and refreshment of their jaded palettes in the simple roadside inn and their laughter was unbounded under the roof of their haven. The names of those gathered were scribed variously and cast into a lot for the furtherance of Chance. The lots were drawn amid much perturbation of the senses of those present.

The Ja-son, son of Ja, called aloud the appellations of the first pair and he cried out, "Thou shalt do battle in The Standing Game! Clear the Floor of Combat." The small gods unquivered their lancelets and did flex sinews and muscles grown lax and enfeebled with disuse. They stood before the segmented disc that men have used to test their manhood since time unknown and prepared to while eternity away in play. The fierce impaling of the paper and the plastered walls around the game-board began and the assembled Watchers withdrew to a safe distance.

Meanwhile Cheryl the Fair gathered about her the dusty board of play and the many ebon tablets of The Sitting Game. She designated the first protagonists and withdrew to watch the slow circling of the board by the dark pieces at the hands of the warrior gods that marks the beginning of hostilities and signals to the Watchers that it was time to grow drowsy and to slumber.

Time, the hound of the Gods, curled upon the carpet and lay still. The Hostess of the gods brought bright salvers piled high with viands, rich meats, eggs of birds brought from the orient many aeons before, and savoury cheeses, all bound in wholesome breads and decked with summer leaves and red fruits. The gods ate their fill and still the salvers were cumbered with their fare. Lesser beings gathered in that bright room were allowed to enjoy the leavings of the gods.

Time woke and shook the dust of slow hours from its coat. The Games were drawing to a close. With bated breath the throng watched the final battles being waged. Victory comes sudden as death in these Games and so it was that doubt moved to surety in the last throw and the last turn of each contest.

The Vanquishers of all the Kfell-Far-Ers stood proud amid the vanquished and they embraced their spoils with clutching hands and ardent eyes. A glass vessel of iridescent hue was each prize, brimming with dark rubicund wines, bounty of bright drouthy lands far beyond our dim hills. Ro-Ger and Cheryl the smiling victors were named and their names will endure forever in the History of Kfell-Far-ers that will be told by the small gods when man no longer walks the earth and beyond that until the End of All That Is.

With apologies to the Hon. Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett, 18th Baron of Dunsany 1878 - 1957. Lord Dunsany was an influential writer of fantasy fiction, very famous during his lifetime but now almost forgotten.

His name is quite a mouthful but his brother, a noted British naval officer, fared worse at the hands of his parents. He was known to his mates in the pub as Admiral The Honourable Sir Reginald Aylmer Ranfurly Plunkett-Ernl-Erle-Drax. I just thought you'd like to know that. (Source: Wikipedia)



AT THE HUT WITH 'THE LADS'

Saturday 3rd December 2011

David Birkett

On the first weekend in December there is a gathering of the 'Kendal Lads' at High House, a group of friends who have for 52 years gathered to walk and climb together and increasingly to reminisce about past events. We would meet up in the Nagg's Head (now the Istanbul bar on Blackhall Road) on Friday nights and plan the weekend's walking, rock-climbing, caving and skiing in the winter. The first dinner was at Seathwaite Fam with Nancy Edmondson and later settled at the Scafell Hotel. The only person to have gone to every dinner is Roger Atkinson, and our thanks must go to Peter Goff for the arrangements over the years.

I had phoned Phil Blamire, a friend since graduating from the 'Stramongate University' in Kendal and we arranged to meet early at the hut on Saturday morning and go walking in Borrowdale. The previous night had been a 'hooligan' in Borrowdale so Phil had had little sleep, every creak and groan of the structure and surrounding trees could be heard. The day dawned bright and breezy, 10.30 we left the foot of Troutdale passing Troutdale cottages old and new, the new a mirror image of the old, all in local materials but of mansion proportions. Sadly both of us had not been up the dale for the last 30 years having missed the scattering of Brian (Ted) Huck's ashes in 1996. Ted was an architect and excellent skier, always had a song to offer and convivial company.

At the bifurcations of the bridleway and the footpath we climbed steeply between Black Crag and Great End, a well pitched stone path gained height quickly. Looking back at Black Crag (*top left*) our thoughts dwelt on Troutdale Pinnacle, a magnificent rock climb, play ground of our youth. Perhaps one of the best routes in the Lake District of an easier grade (severe) 105m long, first climbed in 1914 by Mallinson and Mason, clearly a bench-mark of the day. Several couples passed by as we ate our butties, Phil commented on how busy it was we agreed on a Saturday 30 years ago you wouldn't have seen a soul. Onwards and upwards towards the summit of King's How passing an overgrown tarn and a plaque. The Baddley Guide states 'Grange Fell and Borrowdale Birches, 310 acres were purchased in 1910 for £2,210 by the National Trust as a memorial to King Edwards the VII' and was later dedicated by his sister Princess Louise (*middle left*).

King's How (392m) has a fine summit with good all-round views (*Phil, bottom left*). The descent is steep and twisting in a south westerly direction to join the River Derwent at Eelstep Brow. We joined the bridleway to the famous Bowderstone, once a Victorian curiosity, 'some 30ft high and 60ft long and its weight computed as 1,900 tons' (Baddley). The broad well maintained track passes Wodens Face and Quay Foot Buttress crags, play ground of our youth, where we joined the road back to the car.

The 52nd. Lads' Dinner was the normal 'good crack' and this time fairly sober event. As is the case these days, the price goes up and the fare is reduced but is of the usually excellent quality. Back to the hut: more booze and 'crack', bed beckons, freezing bunk-room, who cares?

Sunday was a much quieter day in weather terms. Enthusiasm was in short supply. Frustrated, I set-off for Seathwaite Fell but returned after 2 hours, the sleet and driving snow showers having brought me to my senses.



You must ascend a mountain to learn your relation to matter, and so to your own body, for it is at home there, though you are not.



The Sunrise Walk

Cheryl, George & Jason Smallwood, Val Calder, Tina Ford, Fred & Jean Underhill, Roger Atkinson, Gary Sandys and Kati Clegg, Rod Muncey, Richard Mercer, plus Lottie and Oscar

The plan was to meet at The Rifleman's Arms for 7 am, walk up on to the Scar to see the sunrise and then return to town for a hearty breakfast at The Union Jack Café. It was worth getting up ridiculously early just for a slightly foggy walk to the start point, along pavements clothed in freshly fallen snow and lit by an enormous full moon.

At 7.10 am those assembled decided that it seemed unlikely anyone else would now arrive, and so we set off up the Brigsteer Road. The going was generally easy, except where there were frozen puddles covered over by the snow which was now deeper than in the town, as we were the first to tread the pavements and fields.

It was around 8 am when we arrived at The Mushroom for a quick stop for those who wanted a hot drink, and affording time for Lottie and Oscar to jockey for possession of a stick. Then on to the trig point for the sunrise shortly after 8.20 am, its crimson gold muted by the clouds.

By this stage those who'd not eaten first breakfast were beginning to eagerly anticipate arriving at The Union Jack. Our route down afforded splendid views all around and brought us into town via Chapel Lane so only a short way from the cafe. This descent route proved to be a good one as, although it was slightly slippery going and care was needed on the fields, footpaths and eventual roads, it wasn't too steep.

As the town grew closer and a more level pathway attained through the houses, footsteps hastened with everyone's thoughts now turning to a steaming plate of breakfast and a pot of tea (or cold Irn Bru in George's case!).

The Union Jack didn't let us down and we all ate well and were fortified for the day ahead. All present agreed that the walk had been splendid, and we're already looking forward to the 2012 Sunrise Walk.

Mud, Mud, Glorious Mud

*Mid-week Walk No. 21
Wednesday 14 December 2011*

Mike Pak

The forecast said sunny intervals and scattered showers and so on a grey and chilly morning 14 intrepid Fellfarers gathered at the Yew Tree Barn for coffee and the prospect of Hughie's short walk over Bigland Barrow.

The mood was set fair, even if the weather was a bit suspect, but we should have had an inkling of what was to come when Angie, having delivered a batch of mince pies said "I'm off home to sit in front of a warm fire!"

At Canry Hill, suitably clad and shod (i.e. as much clothing as possible!) (*top left*), the walk and the scattered showers (that's a meteorological understatement!) started.

We set off over the wonderfully remote and wild fells above Backbarrow. They're quiet hills, especially on a December day and a good place to get away from the crowds.....but maybe there's a reason why! As we progressed up the fellside, the tracks became just that little bit tougher and swamper, reaching the stage of full-on bog in places! The weather took a turn for the worse too and various mid-week walk leaders stated "the weather's never like this on my walks Hughie."

We eventually arrived at the summit of 'Bogland' Barrow, topped with a rather ancient and rickety concrete lookout (which the Fellfarers with a leaning for the vertical just had to climb).

Lunch was taken at the entrance to Bigland Hall, and, for just a few moments, it stopped raining.

On now through Seattle Plantation, the paths turning to rivers, the bridges slipperier than a slippery thing. The conversations turned to how wet the wet could be and how muddy the mud could be. Boggy mud, muddy mud, farmyard mud, we encountered it all. "It wasn't like this in the summer" muttered Hugh. Which particular summer, we were not sure, perhaps the long hot one of 1976 (yes, we were all of an age to remember that one!).

But there was a wealth of wildlife to be seen and add extra interest to the day: a rather handsome ram with a fine set of horns (*second left*), a friendly herd of Belted Galloways and, near Seattle, first one and then a family (presumably) of four red kites. A first, and very welcome, sighting for all of us in the Lakes.

Five and a half miles in to this five and a half mile walk and still with no end in sight, questions were being asked: "Is a Hugh mile longer than your average mile?" Maybe it was a case of two steps forward and one back!

Eventually the end was reached and our intrepid band of walkers, spirits dampened but not extinguished, beat a hasty retreat to the Yew Tree for warming cups of tea.

So thanks to Hughie for the wettest, muddiest, dampest, longest 5½ mile walk of the year.... but we will forgive you because you did carry Angie's wonderful mince pies to the lunch spot!

And thanks to Angie for the mince pies (and being sensible enough to sit in front of a nice warm fire!).

And as for the sunny intervals, they eventually turned up.... the following day!

The 2nd Sunrise Walk

Scout Scar – Saturday 10 December 2011

Tina Ford



The 5th KFF Annual All Terrain Toboggan Trials

Sat 31st December 2011

Alec Reynolds

This year's trials had an additional hardship to overcome, i.e. it rained most of the day and the conditions were terrible. Thanks to all those who took part for persevering. The highlights were:

1. All five competitors finished each event.
2. At one point on the downhill trial all five competitors were stationary with mud up to the axles.
3. Kevin's craft collapsed in the axle department and needed major engineering works before being able to continue with the speed trial. (That seems familiar.)
4. On the speed trial from Hut to gate Colin set a new track record of 22.3 seconds.
5. The road trial was run on a different basis this year. The competitors just steered while five young volunteers provided the muscle

power. Allocation of volunteer to competitor was made at random at the last minute to avoid bribery and corruption. The new basis should be continued in the future because it provided a more exciting race and involved the youngsters. Thank you Claire, Jessica, Adam, Matthew and Matthew.

6. The water trial was almost abandoned due to drowning conditions in the river. The usual location was far too dangerous, as was the river near Mountain View. In the end the trial was held on a stretch of the river ending very conveniently at the Scafell Hotel car park.

7. The style marks were given by two lady spectators and were biased by rain drops glistening on the hairy legs of a certain winner. Perhaps this section should be judged in future by gentlemen spectators?

RESULTS	Fell		Track			Road		Beck			Style	Total	Final
	Pts.	Pos.	Time	Pts.	Pos.	Pts.	Pos.	Time	Pts.	Pos.	Pts.	Pts.	Position
Colin Jennings	10	1st	22.3	10	1st	9	2nd	39.1	9	2nd	9	47	1st
Kevin Smith	6	5th	26	9	2nd	10	1st	36.4	10	1st	7	42	2nd
Graham Ball	9	2nd	54.5	7	4th	7	4th	45.5	8	3rd	8	39	3rd
Richard Mercer	8	3rd	31.2	8	3rd	6	5th	53.9	7	4th	2	31	4th
Mark Walsh	8	3rd	71.8	6	5th	8	3rd	57.3	6	5th	22	30	5th

THE PICTURES, BELOW AND OPPOSITE, ARE GIVEN WITHOUT COMMENT—BECAUSE NONE IS NEEDED REALLY





Brian (Charlie) Birkett's walk

14th Jan 2012

D Birkett

The annual walk coincided with Brian's birthday on 14th January, some eight years since his passing.

Eleven Fellfarers gathered in bright sunshine at the County Hall and walked by Stoney Lane, Cooley Barn and so to the 17th century Manor House at Helsfell (old) Hall.

Having crossed the bypass we viewed the site of the wartime targets and so to Cunsick Scar where a few verses were read from Tom Patey's book 'One Man's Mountain'.

Onwards back over the pass to Boundary Bank, concluding with a viewing of the fine Greenside Lime Kiln before a pint at the Rifemans.





Why we go to Glencoe

Scottish Winter Meet, Clachaig, Glencoe

13th – 15th January 2011

Graham Stewart, Hugh Taylor, Mel Middleton, Alan Wilson, Mick Fox.

It's always a risk and one that often doesn't pay off: a long drive and a wad of banknotes handed over for a weekend spend watching the rain splattering against the chalet window.

Sometimes, though, the laws of probability come into play and we get a stunner that makes it all worthwhile. This was one of those trips.

Graham travelled independently from Furness and managed a bit of skiing on arrival on Friday. The other four of us squeezed all our gear into Hugh's car and debated, as he drove, the merits of various easy hills to break our journey north. Over coffee at Annandale Water we opted for Tinto, a short way to the east of the M74, a hill that is classified as a 'Graham', a 'Donald', a 'Marilyn' and a 'HuMP' (see the excellent website 'The Mountains of Scotland', <http://www.hill-bagging.co.uk/Scotland/Scotland.php>). Some would say that it's just a fine easy hill with far-reaching views from its stony summit (*top left*).

Friday night was quiet in the Clachaig Inn – but not as quiet as Hugh would have liked. He predicted no more than a dozen customers would be there when we entered and promised a round of whiskies if he was wrong. Three of us were delighted to count almost twice that number and later enjoyed the fruits of Hugh's misplaced predictions.

Saturday was forecast to be a day of misty valleys and sunlit tops but nobody told the clouds that. They remained stubbornly anchored at 3,000 feet and Graham's early start to get his (first ever) winter view from Ben Nevis summit in good weather proved to be wasted. He spent yet another day wandering round the summit plateau in freezing fog, growing icicles on his eyebrows, and waiting vainly for the sun to come through.

Mel and Hugh ventured south to Loch Creran and added Beinn Sgùlaird to their tally of Munros climbed. They too spent time navigating by map and compass on the rough summit and agreed later that it was a hard day.

Alan climbed to the only top that he's not already done on the valley, Sgor na Ciche (the Pap of Glencoe), and so stayed below the cloud to enjoy good views.

Mick also stayed in clear weather, but only just. His hill, Meall Lighiche, at 2533 feet, was just occasionally touched by drifting clouds. From the summit he surveyed the steep northern slopes of Sgor na h-Ulaidh and remembered his ascent, perhaps 20 years ago, when he had cut steps in the ice to the summit and then descended with a carefree winter glissade amongst those fierce-looking crags *in running shoes*. Suddenly his boots felt very heavy on his feet.

The Clachaig was busy that night by many pubs' standards but not by its own. We were able to get seats and listen to the singer/guitarist while the groups of student climbers and walkers, fewer than usual, danced and sang the evening away with great gusto.

Sunday's dawn revealed a blue sky and sparkling hoarfrost decorating the glen's trees. Graham decided to ascend that horrible track which climbs alongside the Clachaig Gully to the summit of Sgor nam Fiannaich "for something to do" before heading for home. Even the SMC Munro book says "this route is not recommended". The remaining four of us asked to stay on another night in the chalet and then set off onto the hills again.

Mel retraced Mick's steps of the day before, into Gleann-leac-na-muidhe, before tackling the imposing ice-bound Sgor na h-Ulaidh.

Hugh, Alan and Mick drove down Glen Etive to park below the Stob Dubh, "steep, dark and intimidating" according to the SMC guidebook. Our route, the SW ridge, certainly looked steep and long but it was lit with winter sunlight that invited us onward as we crossed the two rivers and approached the base of the ridge (*second left*). The one doubt in our minds was centred on the fierce-looking crags which seemed to bar the way at about two-thirds height. We climbed slowly on steep tussocky grass, with dramatic towering snow-capped summits in every direction giving us many excuses to stop and gaze. Dark clouds menaced the tops of Ben Starav but elsewhere the sun shone bright upon the slopes. The barrier of rock loomed nearer and then, imposter, melted away into minor crags with an easy, if steep,





Present: Clare, Hugh, David, Mike, Sue, Tony, Frank, Sally the dog

We set off at 10.15 from Elterwater, heading up behind the quarry on the road to Lingmoor Fell. The weather was not looking promising but the route offered the potential for indulging the senses in the all round splendour that is Langdale. Quarry road gave way to woodland path as we made our way through the protected stands of Sawrey's Wood. A steady climb over open fell ensued, affording us views across the lower end of Great Langdale and the broad stretches of fields that in summer are frequently bedecked with brightly coloured tents of all shapes and sizes.

Good conversation had seen our little group progress to this point without the need to address the subject of the inclement elements and this is the way it remained as we approached the relatively open fell nearing the top of Lingmoor. At this point neither distraction nor denial was a viable option as the near gale force winds threatened to scatter us, dishevelled, to the lower reaches of Little Langdale, just to the south. As the rain began to lash, more horizontal than vertical, one or two of our group lingered a while to don overtrousers and additional warming layers.

It was about 12 noon as we reached the summit of Lingmoor Fell or Brown How. It was here that decisions were made: first to stop for lunch in the partial quietude afforded by the summit rock mound and, subsequent to the meal, an agreement by all concerned to head back, more or less the way we came, save for a slight detour, in view of the deterioration in the weather. It had closed in and views, enjoyment and overall comfort were deteriorating with it.

We made our way back to lower elevations and joined the path into Elterwater with, I think, everyone in agreement that the walk had been exhilarating but rendered difficult by the wind and rain. Sally the dog did the walk at least twice and included quite a few side routes which took her fancy.

We finished the day with an enjoyable cup of tea in the café at Skelwith Bridge. Despite the weather, a good walk, enjoyed by all present.

Thank you David for organising it.

Illustration right: Lingmoor Fell on a better day

shaley track threading through them. The glen, far below us now, faded into a ghostly haze but the sky above increased its blue brilliance as, kicking steps in hard snow now, we approached the summit cairn. The air stirred only slightly as we sat there and munched our lunch (*third down, opposite*) but we needed every bit of spare clothing against its icy flow. Ben Nevis stood clear to the north; it would have been a grand day for Graham to have gone up there. Vapour trails and wispy clouds began to build up and the sun turned hazy as we shivered (*bottom opposite*). Sandwiches gone and photos taken, we hurried down, following our tracks of ascent to the snow's edge. We marked with gratitude the single-stone cairns which marked our approach to the safe line through the crags and we were soon losing height rapidly, down into the shadowy glen. The hills turned softly pink, dreamlike, as the western sky flared at the sun's going (*top left*). Even the frozen puddles glowed red in the gloom as we approached the road once more.

In the Clachaig bar that evening, no longer needing to compete with an amplified musician, four contented Fellfarers talked and drank until they were the last ones sitting. A grand end to a classic day out.

Monday meant we were really going home this time but the good weather was still holding and we agreed to get in one more hill-day. Creag Mac Rannaich, just north of Locheearnhead, looked a good option. We didn't have a map but, experienced mountaineers that we are, we thought we'd manage this short up-and-down hill easily enough. We climbed very rough frozen ground, steeply towards the end, to the ridge before us. We expected a short stroll on the ridgetop when we arrived at the skyline but were dismayed to see the summit, craggy and obvious, on the distant horizon; across what looked like miles of snowy moor. All deception of course and, having decided to 'go for it' anyway (*second left*), we were pleasantly surprised to find ourselves at the summit cairn in only half an hour. A racing descent, with Mel setting a storming pace, got us back to the car in record time too.

As we pulled off our boots before heading south we all agreed that this Meet had been "Why we go to Glencoe"

Mid-Week Walk No. 22
 Wednesday 25 January 2012
 Lingmoor Fell from Elterwater.
Tony Maguire

The Fellfarer
 Apr 2012
 11

Three Ticks

Backstone Edge

1st February 2012

A circuit of all the tops around Devoke Water and then an afternoon's soloing routes at Hutton Roof, both days bathed in warm sunshine. Yes, it's been a grand week so far - and it's only Wednesday! An optician's appointment in the late morning only gives me a few hours but I can't let the day go to waste. I make a sandwich and head the car north, towards the snowy tops of the Pennines.

I have several lists : summits, scrambles, climbs etc. and most of my outings are driven by this urge to tick them off, to '*do it all*'. Some friends are ticking of the 432 Nuttalls (the 2,000 ft summits of England and Wales) but I have a sort of super-Nuttall list, a real geek's list of every 2,000 ft place that has at least one complete contour ring around it, 720 tops in all. This gets me to mountain places rarely trodden by man and almost always gives me long days with map and compass.

Today I'm heading for Backstone Edge, high above the sleepy village of Dufton, but this summit is flanked by two of my 'insignificant tops' so it won't be a simple 'up-and-down' day. There'll be several miles of moorland walking. As the Pennines come into view, white tops gleaming in the sunlight, I wonder about the conditions up there. I'm estimating times; have I chosen badly? I don't really want to be caught in the dark. I usually reckon on 2 hill miles per hour (I can never remember how to work Naismith's Rule) as an easy pace, including stops, and I can comfortably up that to 3 mph when I'm on my own. I'll have just 3 hours to sunset to cover over 9 miles but there's no reserve for poor ground or for navigational errors. Still, I have the headtorch so I'm not fretting.

The lane leading from Town Head around Dufton Pike towards the snowy tops is like iron, frozen and unyielding. The solid puddles shine in the sunlight (*top left*). A pipe trickling water below the track has been splashing the tall grass around and has turned each stalk into an ice phallus. The world is silent; even the crows are gone. Some life though: a border collie appears and adopts me for a while. His tail wags as he leads me along the track, turning frequently to check that I'm following. I stop to test him and he turns back, circles me with a pleading look in his eye and so we resume our silent walking partnership. At the fell gate he lets me go through alone and then races back down the track to home.

I climb the easy gradient into the mine workings of Threlkeld Side. The crags are magnificent in the snow and sunlight (*second left*). I remember that I was here only once before, exploring the mines with Richard Mercer in April '95. There was a superb narrow stone channel which carried water for hundreds of yards down the fellside but we couldn't work out why. I spot it far to my left but there's no time today for sight-seeing. A cold wind blows off the moor and I shelter in the kiln under the crags to eat a hasty lunch.

The track winds up onto the open moor and heads eastwards, but my first top, High Scald Fell, is off to the north so I climb off the easy going - and plunge up to my knees into a hole hidden in the snow. This is not going to be much fun. The terrain is so deceptive. It looks like simple strolling across level ground with an inch or two of snow-cover. The reality is that it's all tussocks with the snow blown into the spaces between. Each step is a fresh surprise, and not a pleasant one. It gets worse; the area is cut up with many drainage ditches, also filled with snow and often too wide to step across. I find myself, time after time, sprawling face down with my legs buried.

I reach my first top (*third left*) and turn around. It's beautiful here but it's too cold to stop. The frozen moor is raked by a wind as unfriendly as the ground. I retrace my steps to the track and then head south towards Backstone Edge. The hard work continues without respite but I am, perversely, enjoying it. A trig point appears on the moor edge but the summit, cairned, stands hundreds of yards back from it and only 20 feet higher. I charge on, conscious now of the sun dropping in the west. There is another top a long mile away and the ground really gets rough now. It's broken by peat-hagged water courses, impossible to avoid, and my walk becomes a real trial. The last top is unmarked, flat and featureless but I don't waste time worrying about finding precisely the highest tussock of grass. The tops are starting to turn pink in the last rays of the sun (*bottom*) as I head towards High Cup.

I'm expecting a simple descent to the Pennine Way path back to Dufton but as I reach the moor edge I'm confronted by snow-covered boulder fields dropping steeply below me. No path in sight in the whiteness below. I scramble gingerly down, boots sliding into snow-filled crevices and shins getting rapped in the process. It's not a good time to risk a broken leg but I do need to keep moving. The track appears eventually of course and I turn to follow its icy course back to the car.

I remove my boots from aching feet. Dufton's cottage windows are all aglow in the dusk. I can't help smiling to myself; it's been grand.



GOOD LUCK AT HIGH HOUSE



That horseshoe nailed above the door at High House. What's that all about then? I know, in a vague sort of way, that horseshoes are lucky but didn't know why.

Then I came upon a little verse that set me wondering:

**"No wonder skies upon you frown,
You've nailed the horse-shoe upside down;
Just turn it round, and soon you'll see
How you and Fortune will agree."**

James T. Fields

Horseshoes are considered to be a symbol of good luck throughout the world but there are some rules: A truly lucky horseshoe must have been used and must have been discovered by accident. This is because a talisman can only possess its special value if it is an unsought gift from the gods. You cannot make or buy good luck.

The shoe is almost invariably placed above the entrance door of the house or animal dwelling.

In all traditions, luck is *contained* in the shoe and can *pour out* through the ends. This gives rise to differing regional customs: When used on a house, the horseshoe is placed facing upward to stop the luck running out in some countries and in others it must point down so the luck can pour onto those passing beneath.

When used for magical protection over the doorways of barns and stables, however, the horseshoe usually points downward so that "no evil or witch will pass under it."

Some believe that if guests come to a house where a horseshoe is above the door, they must leave by the same door through which they entered or they will take the luck from the horseshoe with them from the house.

There are several theories about the origin of the lucky horseshoe belief, the most notable being from classical Greece, from Christian tradition and from Northern mythology :

GREEK. Horseshoes were used by the Greeks in the 4th century B. C. Horses were believed to be one of the most sacred of animals, and their crescent-shaped shoes became symbols of good luck. Iron itself was considered magical because it is born from the marriage of rock and fire, two of the basic elements in ancient times. Blacksmiths were alchemical masters of these elements and their creations were believed to be endowed with supernatural powers.

CHRISTIAN. Although the horseshoe has no direct connection with Christianity, it has been absorbed as a minor element of its history:

Saint Dunstan, who became the Archbishop of Canterbury in AD 959, was a blacksmith by trade. The story relates that he was asked to help the Devil by repairing a damaged hoof. He did so by using a horseshoe which caused the Devil great pain. Dunstan only agreed to remove the shoe and release him after the Devil promised never to enter a place where a horseshoe is hung over the door.

NORTHERN EUROPE. The Germanic god Wodan (in Norse: Odin who rode an eight-legged horse named Sleipnir) was not only the supreme deity but also a magician. The horseshoe was one of his symbols and inherits some of his magical attributes. Sacrifices were made to Wodan after the harvest, and cakes shaped like horseshoes are still baked in memory of this on St. Martin's Day in November throughout Germany.

Variations in customs are found all over the western world:

Throughout Germany a horseshoe nailed on the threshold of a house with the points upward, is protection against hags, fiends, fire and lightning; but if reversed it brings misfortune. In some parts the luck only comes if the find is kept secret until the shoe is fixed with three nails, and by three blows of a hammer.

In some US states, the horseshoe is placed with the prongs downward, so that the luck may be spilled into the house.

In Tuscany a horseshoe when found is placed in a small red bag with some hay, which is also a luck-bringing article, and the twofold charm is kept in its owner's bed.

In Northumberland the holes free of nails are carefully counted, as these indicate in years how soon the finder will be married.

The peasants of northern Portugal prefer shoes (mules rather than horses here) having an uneven number of nail-holes to ward off the evil influences of the dreaded witches known as the Bruxas.

In Derbyshire the horseshoe is driven, prongs upward, between two flagstones near the door of the dwelling.

In Scotland a horseshoe will protect quarrelling neighbours from each others ill-wishes if placed between their houses and it was an old Scottish belief that passing a horse-shoe "*thrice beneath the belly and over the back of a cow will cure it of being elf-shot*".

Transylvanian peasants place broken horseshoes in their animals water troughs on St. John's Day to ward off summer sickness.

In Lincolnshire there was a custom of charming ash-trees by burying horseshoes under them. Stroking a beast, "*over which a shrew-mouse had run, or which had been exposed to the glance of an evil eye*", with twigs from the tree will then cure it.

In some Catholic countries priests brand farm animals on the forehead with the mark of a horseshoe as protection against disease.

In Bohemia the world-wide superstition is for some reason reversed: whoever picks up a horseshoe brings ill-luck on himself. Presumably the roads of Bohemia are littered with old horseshoes that nobody will pick up! They do believe, however, that a horse-shoe is a cure for lunacy.

As a general rule, the degree of luck coming from a horse-shoe found by chance depends on the number of nails remaining in it; the more nails the more luck. A shoe was commonly held in place by seven iron nails and the number seven was considered to be highly significant: Life was divided into seven ages; a seventh child was thought to have special powers; there are seven days in a week; the moon changes phases every seven days, and so on.

The horse-shoe is potent as a charm on the sea as well as on land, and it has long been a practice among sailors to nail one against the mast or stern-post of a vessel as a protection against the Evil One. The shoe of a "wraith-horse," the mythical offspring of a water-stallion, is especially esteemed by Scottish mariners for this purpose. The practice is especially common on commercial vessels sailing between the Baltic Sea ports and in German inland waters.

Some cultures have taken the custom a little further, presumably to squeeze a little extra luck out of the gods:

The ancient Irish would hang up in their houses not just a shoe but a whole leg of their deceased steeds, setting an especial value upon the hoofs; and in China to-day a horse's hoof hung up indoors is supposed to have the same protective influence that a horse-shoe has elsewhere. In southwestern Germany it is still a common practice to nail a hoof over the stable-door; and in the Netherlands a horse's foot placed in a stable is thought to keep the horses from being bewitched.

So there you are: next time you pass through the door into High House, glance upwards and.....be lucky!

Perfidious Weather and the 3rd KFF Ceilidh

Saturday 4th February 2012



After a year off, the KFF Ceilidh returned to the Calendar by popular demand.

Enough tickets were sold to ensure a financial success, the beer was bought, prizes scrounged, and all of the other arrangements were made. Perfect planning....except that it snowed. Then it snowed some more and then it kept snowing. The phone in the Secretary's house was ringing all day with enforced cancellations and the writer was secretly hoping that, to save embarrassment, the event would be called off.

It wasn't, of course, and the Kendal members, staunch lads and lassies everyone of them, set off on foot through the 'deep and crisp and even' to Castle Street Centre. There were perhaps half the expected numbers there but that just meant we had more room to fling ourselves about on the dance floor!

Half of Tumbling Tom were able to turn up too and so the music and the merriment commenced as planned.

The hardest task (sigh!) was ensuring that none of the beer went to waste but the merfolk rose to the occasion and managed to work their way down to the dregs. Stout fellows they are ... and getting stouter.

Yes, it was a fine evening and thanks go to all those (band and audience) who managed to arrive to make it so.

Thanks also to the many members who paid for their tickets after the event, even though they couldn't get there on the evening. Their generosity ensured that the ceilidh managed to avoid financial disaster and even make a small profit.

Members of the Social Sub-committee don't get any thanks of course because, as everyone knows, theirs is a thankless task!

Seriously, well done everyone. Now, when's the next one?



IMAGES BY:
A SMALL CHILD LET LOOSE
WITH A CAMERA

A rare treat for the Fellfarers - a walk with someone who knows what he's talking about! Mike Pak had arranged for a colleague, Dr Simon Bainbridge of Lancaster University, to walk with us around William Wordsworth's old stomping grounds and to explain the significance of the landscape to Lakeland's greatest poet.

The day started with rain but 17 Fellfarers and their friends believed the good forecast and met at Rydal Mount. Their belief was justified (*top right*) and the sun lit up Nab Scar as the clouds melted away and the road began to dry. We walked through Dora's Field and over the Rothay to learn of Wordsworth's belief that real knowledge comes from nature rather than from books:

*One impulse from a vernal Wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.*

On to Rydal Caves, where a cool breeze pushed fairweather clouds across the blue sky (*second right*) and the sun lit up a snow-dusted Ullscarf. We heard of William's childhood rock-climbing exploits (to rob, it must be said, birds' nests):

*Oh! when I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill-sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag,*

On to Loughrigg Terrace:

*The station whence he looked was soft and green,
Not giddy yet aerial, with a depth
Of vale below, a height of hills above.
For rest of body perfect was the spot,*

We listened to the schoolboy's reaction to that the first sight of Grasmere:

What happy fortune were it here to live!

A kestrel hovered directly over our heads, perhaps listening:

*High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! Then off, off forth on swing*

Oops! That's Gerard Manley Hopkins' 'Windhover' intruding on William's day. Sorry. We wandered down Red Bank to stop where the road overlooks the lake (*third right*) in its sublime surroundings.

*A centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,
A whole without dependence or defect,
Made for itself, and happy in itself,
Perfect contentment, Unity entire.*

Lunch on the Green at Grasmere, and a visit to the Wordsworth graves. Then on past Dove Cottage to the start of the Grasmere-Rydal coffin route, which William often walked with his dog - very useful in warning him to stop reciting when strangers approached:

*Such was his custom; but whene'er he met
A passenger approaching, he would turn
To give me timely notice, and straightway,
Grateful for that admonishment, I hushed
My voice, composed my gait, and, with the air
And mien of one whose thoughts are free, advanced*

Approaching Rydal once more, pausing at the place (*bottom right*) where William celebrated the echo brought forth from the fells by the laughter of his wife's sister, Joanna:

*And the tall Steep of Silver-How sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg heard,
And Fairfield answer'd with a mountain tone:*

And finally, Wordsworth's memories of his time walking with Coleridge and his knowledge that they were of like minds:

*When thou dost to that summer turn thy thoughts,
And hast before thee all which then we were,
To thee, in memory of that happiness,
It will be known, by thee at least, my Friend!*

We finished off with excellent tea and cake in Rydal Hall cafe. Thank you to Mike and Cath for making the arrangements, and to Simon Bainbridge for bringing a rare spot of culture to the Club!

Midweek Walk No. 23, planned for 22nd Feb 2012, was cancelled at short notice because of horrible weather.



Mountains and Deserts

A Winter Mountaineering trip to Morocco's High Atlas - and beyond.
25th February - 7th March 2012



Fellfarers and friends on the summit of Jebel Toubkal



A long time in the planning and going through a 'it's off - it's on' process, this trip finally became a certainty in the New Year when 5 Fellfarers booked with KE Adventure for a guided ascent of Jebel Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa at 4,165 metres (13,655 feet).

Marrakech and the Mountains

Roger Atkinson, Hugh Taylor, Bill Hogarth, Mel Middleton and Mick Fox flew from Manchester to Marrakech where we met Ben, the trip leader (above right), and Hassan, the local guide, and were introduced to Ramsey (above left), Tom (far back, left), Kathryn (back, pink bandana), and Sharon (centre, seated). In fact Tom didn't arrive until two days after the rest of us, having been turned back at the airport after having washed his passport in his jeans pocket. He and his family had to conduct some fast-track logistics back in the UK to get him a new passport and then to try to catch us as we made our way into the High Atlas mountains.

Meanwhile, we all settled into our hotel in the centre of Marrakech and were then taken out for an evening meal. The streets were busy and the members of our little party needed to be alert to avoid being lost in the crowds as Ben hurried us on through the tumult to a little backstreet restaurant. Tajines and couscous were served with cans of warm lager. It was to be our last alcohol for a week but the food, Morocco's staple dish, was to reappear frequently, sometimes twice a day. Stomachs filled, we had a quick tour of the "one of the busiest squares in the world" (*Wikipedia*), the Djemaa el Fna. The huge square bustled with acrobats, dancers, food-sellers, musicians, story-tellers, snake-charmers and water sellers. The air was filled with the sound of pounding drums and the dark sky lit with whirring blue lights thrown by toy-sellers. It was an exciting start to the holiday but we were all travel-weary and were happy to be led back for an early night.

We woke to the harsh cries of the muezzin, the call to prayer, and strolled to the sunlit roof terrace of our hotel for breakfast of coffee, omelette and a selection of breads and cakes. The streets below were almost empty and the atmosphere serene. Over the rooftops, and stretching across the whole southern and eastern horizons, shimmered the snow-capped Atlas mountains, over 50 miles away.

We had a morning's experience of that most touristy of tourist things - the guided tour of the sights, including the Koutoubia Mosque, the Bahia Palace (built in the late 19th century, intended to be the greatest palace of its time. The name means "brilliance") and the largest traditional market in Morocco, the Souk. Once more we had to pay attention - the Souk is no place to go astray. It's a bewildering maze of crowded and very narrow streets; every building has a shopfront; every shop is piled high with delectable things to buy and take home; every shopkeeper invites you in to 'just look - not buy' (*opposite page, bottom left*). Convincing 'antiques' in metal, wood, and wool are being knocked out under your very eyes. It's a wonderful, fascinating, heart-warming place but I wouldn't venture in on my own without a very very good map. On the very edge of the souk, as we stepped out onto a calmer sunlit street, a load of microwaves was being delivered to an electrical shop by donkey and cart.

The bus arrived and we set off for the mountains. The chaos of traffic in the city gave way to calmer roads as we headed south. The driver seemed at ease - he no longer felt the need to hold the steering wheel as we bowled along the dusty road. His hands were needed to illustrate the many stories he was telling to his two co-drivers. The road climbed into a deep valley and the surface deteriorated. We reached Imilil, an extended Berber village which was to be our 'stepping stone' base, in the late afternoon and had time for a wander round. Eyes strained upwards to the fine snowy peaks, all unknown, around us as we followed the pathways and irrigation channels through the tiny terraced fields. The houses are piled up the hillsides - flat land is too precious to build on - and the narrow tracks threaded up and down between the crumbling mud-brick dwellings. Children smiled and wished us 'bonjour' before asking for 'bon-bons' or 'stilos'. Moroccan Arabic is the traditional tongue but French is the language of education and advancement. Hassan, our guide, was proud to tell us that all Berber children (Berbers are native to the Atlas) go to school every day.

Our first outing was an acclimatisation walk to a nearby col, the Tizi n' Mzik. It looked close, perhaps a couple of miles away and only about 2,000 feet above us. I can't explain why but that walk took all day. Some of us went beyond the col to a minor top, Tasghimot, at 2,640 metres and felt that we'd had a good day's walk. Mules often passed us with their laden panniers - the track was the equivalent of an old Lakeland pack-horse route between valleys (*top right*). On the summit of the pass a minuscule stone hut provided Coke and Sprite for thirsty muleteers. Later, on the descent, we were met by our own mules carrying lunch! Fresh omelettes and tea on carpets under the sunlit snowy summits. Delectable.

So, nicely acclimatised (haa!), we made an early start on the following day. Our winter gear, ironmongery and so on, was loaded onto the mules and we set off through the village pathways, heading for the side valley that would take us up to the Neltner Refuge at over 3,000 metres.

We threaded the narrow lanes between fields and houses, past Hassan's Mother-in-Law's house (she wanted to chat) and onwards on the busy track towards the Chamarouch shrine. Shrine? In a Moslem country? Hassan explained that shrines are not allowed in the teachings of the Koran but in all religions there will be offshoots that can't be controlled. The shrine is a point of pilgrimage for spinsters who wish to marry, infertile wives who wish to conceive, and others who are unhappy with their lives. We saw several sad people on their way there by mule. For us the shrine was a stopping point for tea. We had been drinking Moroccan mint tea regularly but this was special - clove tea! We were invigorated and set off again into the harsh upper valley with enthusiasm. The way got stony and then snowy. A runaway mule threatened us all as it charged headlong down the track.

The Neltner Refuge is one of two ugly concrete modern buildings set in the snow below towering peaks. It was marginally warmer inside but the log fire (for which we had paid) was invisible behind a wall of Dutch, then French, then Italian backs. Dreary songs came from somewhere around the fireside. We were jolly, however, over our meal and then decided to forsake the songs for an early night. It was 8.30 pm.

Ben slept through all the alarms. So did we but we're not being paid! A hurried breakfast and then out into the bright morning, strapping crampons on with numb fingers and then plodding steeply upwards before 7.15 am. Steep? Our route was to climb over 3,000 feet in just over a mile. Crampons crunched on the crust and our poles and axe-shafts emitted groans, creaks and squeals in the snow as we hauled ourselves upwards. We aimed for a high col,



then into a corrie (*above*), then a skyline col where, hooray, the summit came into view. 'Only 40 minutes', Hassan said but it was a very long 40 minutes before we stood on the summit, higher than all of North Africa. We celebrated with photographs (*title picture*) and handfuls of Hassan's Trail Mix. Scrumptious. Then we had to face the long steep way down...

Next day; another late/early start. The main objective was a high col, the Tizi n'Ouagane. Into a 'Lost Valley', through a gorge which is impassable in summer when it's not filled with snow, and up to the high col which is where everything ends. Steep crags on either side and plunging corniced rocks below. Most opted to turn back but Hassan offered a route up the steep ridge to our right to the second peak of the Atlas. Bill, Mel and Mick said yes and were soon testing crampons and axes on mixed ground on the pinnacled ridge up to the snowy plateau of Ouanakrim at 4,089 metres (*below, Mick, Hassan and Bill, Toubkal behind to the left*). We stood on the very edge of the snowy Atlas, looking south to the tawny foothills and beyond, on the far horizon, the baking sands of the Sahara.



and beyond - the desert

We returned to Marrakech, the "Ochre City", for a last night (Friday) with our fellow travellers. We had booked a flight home for Wednesday night and were now in control of our own lives. Hassan had helped us to book a car and we waited at the hotel reception for its arrival on Saturday morning. The car arrived, a Romanian Dacia Logan which no-one had ever heard of. Interestingly, its white panel work was decorated with more dents than I have ever seen on a single car before. Actually, it was perfect for driving on Marrakech's manic streets - we didn't need to worry about another bump or two. Once clear of the city and on the open road, blood began to return to our white knuckles and we could enjoy the fine views on the climb to the Tizi n'Tichka pass which took us over the mountain chain and down onto the parched desert which is the borderland between the Atlas and the Sahara. For 5 days we explored the country, stopping when we felt like it, finding delightful riads (small traditional hotels) to stay in (*top right, the Riad Maktoub in Ait Benhaddou*), and visiting crumbling ancient kasbahs (fortified house) and ksars (fortified village) (*second right, the Benhaddou Ksar*). We drove down long deserted valleys on roads that sometimes disappeared in dried up river-beds. We woke to the muezzin being called from towers where storks nested high above the mud rooftops. On Saturday night we ate by a blazing log fire and listened to the local lads playing Berber music, odd hypnotic rhythms and plaintive nasal vocals, all on nothing stronger than fizzy water and mint tea. We drove as far as the Todra Gorge, now a must-do climbing area. The gorge is impressive (*below left*) but was spoiled somewhat by the graffiti and by the trailing power cables draped across some of the climbs. Beyond the 'narrows' the valley opens out into a glorious array of orange limestone walls, dazzling in the harsh sunlight. We watched climbers and then walked up into the stony hills to lose ourselves for a while (*third right*). On the return journey to Marrakech we diverted into the Dades Gorge (*bottom right*) and learned that even an arid and apparently lifeless landscape like this can keep throwing up delights at every twist of the road. Ah, but you'll have to wait until next winter's slideshow to learn all about that.



Social Sub-committee News

As the old English melody goes 'Summer is Icomen In' - well, we live in hope anyway! Whatever the weather, there's a great calendar of events for you through the summer months.

As mentioned in the last Fellfarer, there's a couple of week-long trips: to the Scottish Small Isles and the Dolomites and there are still places available, if you are interested. See below for more information

Some of the old favourites are back: 'The Spirit of 34 Weekend' is at the end of June and 'Walter's Windermere Water Weekend' is in July.

And the climbing evenings start on Thursday 26th April... at Hutton Roof, of course!

Spring has only just sprung but we're thinking about Autumn events already! If you've got any brilliant ideas, or fancy leading a walk, (mid-week, weekend, moonlight!), please do let us know. And if you've got any ideas for a walk with a difference (whatever that may be!), we'd like to hear from you....

We're also thinking about the winter slide shows. So if you've got any good trips planned or have been somewhere interesting in the past, and you fancy taking the floor for an evening, just let us know!

Following the success of the photographic competition last year, another is planned for this Autumn, so get snapping! More details in the next Fellfarer.

Finally, a big thanks to Jason for his sterling efforts as Social Secretary.

If you've got any ideas for future events or any feedback, please get in touch with Clare, Peter, Jason or Mike.

Hope you have a great summer.

Mike

Midweek 'Second Anniversary Walk'. 18th July 2012

To celebrate the Second Anniversary of our Midweek Walks it is proposed that we meet up at High House on Tuesday evening (making our own arrangements for our evening meal)

On Wednesday morning we walk to Seatoller and there catch the bus to Honister. If you cannot stay on Tuesday night meet us at Honister at 10.30 am.

After a coffee we will set off around 11 am for Moses Trod then onto Beck Head and the traverse path to Sty Head (with an option to thread the Needle for those who want to), followed by a stroll back to High House. A total distance of around 6 miles.

In the evening a communal meal (Jacob's Join) to celebrate our Second Anniversary.

Please contact Clare Fox if you can join us so we can co-ordinate arrangements for the evening meal. Hope you can make it!

Trip to the Dolomites

A meeting held in February agreed the core dates of 13th to 20th June for the Dolomites trip. The base will possibly be the Marmolada Campsite in Canazei village, Val de Fassa and another meeting will be held soon to finalise details. If you are interested in this trip please let Colin Hunter or Clare Fox know.

Small Scottish Isles trip

A meeting was held in February to discuss the above trip and it was agreed to set off for the islands on 18th to 25th May. Hugh has the times of ferries to Canna, Eigg and Rum and details of accommodation available. The longest time on any island will be Rum and if people wish it Hugh will book dormitory accommodation at Kinloch Castle. A dorm. bed with breakfast and evening meal will cost £39 per person per night or £16 if self catering. However if some people prefer their own room/s (single or double) it will be easier if they make their own bookings.

For more information see www.isleofrum.com/placetostay

Calmac visit all the islands, but not each day - to see the timetable look at www.calmac.co.uk/timetables/summertimetables

Another meeting will be held in the near future to firm up arrangements. Please contact Hugh Taylor or Clare Fox if you need more details.

Mark's Easter Weekend Walk & Egg Hunt at High House



Egg Hunt
at 10.30,
followed by:

Family Walk at 1.30 to finish
at about 4.30 at the local
hostelry!

More info: Mark Walsh

Cheryl and Jason and George's Big 'Movin' On' Party at the Rifleman's Arms (obviously)



Saturday
21st
April
2012

7.30 start

Buffet

Make-it-up-
as-you-go-
along music
so bring
along an
instrument.

KFF CLUB EVENTS APRIL– JULY 2012

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

April

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 3rd. Social evening 9 pm onwards)

- Weekend 4th-10th** **High House** is reserved for Fellfarers – Easter Bank Holiday including:
***Easter Egg Hunt** – High House. Start at 10.30 (children only!) and **Family Walk** – Starting at High House at 1.30 and finishing at about 4.30 at the Scafell Hotel. Leader: Mark Walsh.
- Wednesday 18th** **Midweek Walk** – Farlton. Distance 6 miles.
Meet 10.30 am for coffee. The Hideaway Café on A65 (GR540 821). 11 am start. Leader: Mick Fox
- Weekend 20th-22nd** **Away Meet** – Tan-y-Wyddfa, Rhyd Ddu. North Wales.
Oread Hut details on page 2. Info: Peter Goff. Tel: 01524 736990
- Thursday 26th** **Climbing for all** – First Outdoor Climbing Evening of 2012. Hutton Roof Crag (GR 564 782)
Meet at the crag from 6.30. Leader: Mike Palk
- Thursday 26th** **Evening Walk** – Hutton Roof Walk
Meet 6.30 pm. Hutton Roof Church. (GR569 788). Leader: Cath Palk. Tel: 01524 736548
- Then every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different local crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Mike Palk / Mick Fox*

May

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

- Weekend 4th-7th** **High House** is reserved for Fellfarers. May Bank Holiday.
- Weekend 12th-13th** **Follow the Sun Camping Weekend** – wherever the sun is shining!
Location on the dub website a few days before - when a forecast becomes available.
- Tuesday 15th** **Evening Walk** – The Kellet Seeds. Distance 6 miles. Time 3 hours.
Meet 6 pm. The Limebumers Arms, Nether Kellet. Leader: Sandra Atkinson. Tel: 01524 423776
- Week 18th-23rd** ***Scottish Small Isles** – Exploring Rhum, Eigg and other islands. Info: Hugh Taylor
- Wednesday 30th** **Mid-Week Walk** - 'Via Borrowdale Edge to the Flower Meadows'. Distance approximately 6 miles.
Meet 10.30 am. The lay-by just before Hucks Bridge on A6 (GR 552 036). Leader Clare Fox
- Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different local crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Mike Palk / Mick Fox*

June

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

- Week 1st-10th** **High House** is reserved for Fellfarers. The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Holiday!
- Tuesday 19th** **Evening Walk** – Warton. Circular walk. 5 miles. Time 2.5 hours. Then to the New Inn, Yealand.
Meet 6.30 pm. Warton Small Quarry (GR497 727). Leader: Peter Goff. Tel: 01524 736990
- Wednesday 27th** **Mid-Week Walk** – Ingleborough. A circular 10 mile walk with 1,800 ft of ascent.
Meet 10.30 am. Park on roadside by Hill Inn (GR743 777). Leader: Hugh Taylor
- Week 13th-20th** ***Dolomites Camping Meet** – Marmolada Campsite in Canazei village, Val de Fassa.
Details still to be confirmed - see page 19. For more info: Colin & Val Hunter. Tel: 01539 730177
- W'end 30th-1st July** **High House** is reserved for the '**Spirit of '34 Weekend**' Make your own way to the Hut on foot, by bus or bike. **No cars or motorbikes** produced after 1934 allowed! High House will only be available to those taking part in the 'Spirit of '34 Weekend'.
- Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different local crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Mike Palk / Mick Fox*

July

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 3rd. Social evening 9 pm onwards)

- Weekend 6th-7th** **Away Meet** – Walter's Windermere Water Weekend. £5pppn. Canoeing, sailing etc.
Lakeside Camping. (GR401 992). Booking essential. Contact Walter Walshaw or Mike Palk
- Saturday 14th** **Warcop Range Walk**. May be changed to walk in the safe area if the military are firing!
Meet 10.30. Murton Car Park (GR730 220). Leader: Mike Palk
- Wednesday 18th** ***Mid-week Walk** - Second anniversary walk based at High House. Everyone welcome.
See page 19 for details. Leader: Clare Fox
- Tuesday 24th** **Evening Walk** - Crook. Distance 5-6 miles circular walk.
Meet 6.30 pm. Crook Road west of Gilpin Lodge (GR423 962)
Leader: Krysia Nieopokoczycka. Tel: 015395 60523
- 27th July-30th Aug.** **High House** is reserved for Fellfarers.
- Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different local crag every week. Everyone welcome. Info: Mike Palk / Mick Fox*