

Number 70
July 2013

the FellFarer



Editorial

Another milestone clocked up, well for the editor if not for you. Issue number 70. I think I've said before that when I proposed to the committee that we have a newsletter and I volunteered to edit it all those years ago (17^{1/2}!) I didn't expect it to become a lifetime job. That's ok but I sometimes wonder about the implications: The magazine seems to have fallen into a pattern (or is that a rut?) of late and it's worth asking if anyone wants to make suggestions about the format or to volunteer to edit or part-edit a future issue. If you fancy trying your hand at a spot of amateur journalism, let me know. Thank you to contributors Colin Jennings, Ruth Joyce, Mike and Adam Heseltine, Jan Lancaster, Clare Fox, David Birkett, Ellie Woodburn, Margaret Cooper, Roger Atkinson and Josh Weeks for your words and photographs, and my apologies to anyone I've missed.

Ed

Cover Photograph:

Hughie, Ray and Mike meet 'The Wee Minister' in The Lairig, near Spean Bridge. Scottish hotel Meet, 21st March 2013

Deadline for contributions for the next *Fellfarer*:
1st September 2013

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- 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: New Number TBA
- OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
(Reciprocal Rights Partnership)
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Oread huts are available to Fellfarers at the following rates:

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Fellfarers: £5.00 p.p.p.n., Guests: £9.00 p.p.p.n.

Heathy Lea Cottage
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Fellfarers: £4.50 p.p.p.n., Guests: £6.50 p.p.p.n.

Oread Booking Secretary: Derek Pike
19 St. Johns Drive,
Chaddesden,
Derby.
DE216SD
Tel: 01332 670459
email: derekpike1234@btinternet.com

CLUB OFFICIALS



PRESIDENT:	Gordon Pitt	Tel: 015395 68210
VICE PRESIDENT:	Roger Atkinson	Tel: 01539732490
TRUSTEES	Vicky Atkinson	Tel: 07971 408378
	Mick Fox	Tel: 01539 727531
	Cheryl Smallwood	Tel: 01629 650164
	Mark Walsh	Tel: 01606 891050
COMMITTEE		
Chairman:	Roger Atkinson	Tel: 01539 732490 198, Burneside Road Kendal LA96EB email: fratkinson@hotmail.co.uk
Vice Chairman:	Mark Walsh	Tel: 01606 891050 20, Knutsford Road Antrobus Northwich Cheshire CW9 6JW email: m-a-walsh@hotmail.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 Bank Road Carr Bank Milnthorpe Cumbria LA77LE email: JHUGH.TAYLOR@BTINTERNET.COM
Social Secretary:	Mike Palk	Tel: 01524 736548 18, Oxford Street Carnforth Lancs LA5 9LG email: mike.palk@toucansurf.com
Newsletter Editor:	Mick Fox	Tel: 01539 727531 50, Gillinggate Kendal LA94JB email: michaelfox50@hotmail.com
Committee Members:	Alec Reynolds	Tel: 01229 821099
	Helen Speed	Tel: 01539 733959
	Robert Walsh	Tel: 07769 588601
	Tony Walshaw	Tel: 015395 52491
Co-opted Member:	Peter Goff	Tel: 01524 736990
Club Archivist:	Fred Underhill	Tel: 01539 727480

OTHER INFORMATION

Seathwaite Farm (Emergencies only) Tel: 017687 77394
K Fellfarers Club Website: www.kfellfarers.co.uk
High House Website: www.k-fellfarers.co.uk
High House (and farm) **Postcode:** **CA12 5XJ**
High House OS ref: (Explorer OL4) GR 235119
High House Guest Night Fees: £5 p.p.p.n.

Fire Safety

Members will be aware that there has been much discussion recently about the need for a fire escape door from the men's dormitory. Many members disliked the idea and there was a considerable groundswell of opinion against making what was seen to be such a drastic alteration to the building.

Although it seemed clear that in law (The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005) any final exits should be doors and not windows, the committee agreed to seek the professional advice of the Local Fire Officer.

A meeting was arranged on the 25th March, as reported in the last newsletter. Two Fire Officers and the Hut Sub-committee toured the building and the FOs were given a brief history of developments over the last year or two regarding fire safety at High House. (Including the previous Fire Risk Assessment and the resulting improvement to the escape from the ladies washroom, replacement of all upholstery and mattresses, and the banning of candles and chip-frying. They were also shown that we have a monitored system of testing and maintaining gas, electrical and fire safety equipment).

Not only did they confirm that a door is required somewhere in or near the gable of the men's dormitory but they also highlighted several other fire safety shortcomings in the building and in the way in which it is managed. As a result of this meeting the committee has now agreed:

- To negotiate with the National Trust and the LDNPA on the position and appearance of a new emergency escape door from the men's dormitory and to install that door.
- To replace the present fire alarm system and extend it into the drying room.
- To improve the Club's systems of testing, monitoring and recording for the alarm system.
- To replace some internal doors with smoke-sealed self-closing half-hour fire doors. These are the doors from the common room to the stairs, the drying room door and the door into the men's dormitory.
- To provide half-hour fire resistance and smoke sealing on the underside of the floor over the common room and kitchen.

- To replace (or treat with fire-retardant) the upstairs curtains.
- To fix larger warning signs over the upstairs heaters.
- To fix signs over each extinguishers, explaining how to use it in large type.
- To improve our checking of the fire extinguishers
- To improve some escape signs and fire notices
- To move the stove instructions nearer to the common room stove.
- To fully document all processes relating to fire safety.

Some of these things (the easiest!) have been done already and all of them have been started on. They will all move at different rates and you should note that several other projects in the Work Plan have now had to be put 'on the back burner' for this year. *The editor sends his apologies to Fred Underhill for borrowing and updating an old cartoon of his below.*

It should also be known that there was considerable concern from the Fire Officers about the stove in the men's dormitory. We were advised to replace it with a safer form of heating and, fortunately, we were able to show that a circuit had recently been installed for electric heaters there. It may be a job for the future but meanwhile we have enough to be getting on with!

Note that the Fire Officers' only concern is the protection of people, not of the building, and all of their advice was given accordingly. They also made it clear that the ultimate responsibility for fire safety (especially if things go wrong!) lies with us, not the Fire Service.

Oread Booking Secretary

Please note that Colin Hobday has retired from his post of Booking Secretary with Oread Mountaineering Club. If you wish to book bedspaces in either of their huts you should now contact Derek Pike. Derek's contact details are given at the bottom of page 2.

Ladies Washroom

As reported in the Working Weekend article, work has continued in the ladies washroom. Some members have expressed concern about the size of the washbasins. Although the view that they are too small is not unanimous, the committee is considering their replacement. Installation of the shower partition is planned for the September Working Weekend.





Above: Winner of the 'Wild Nature' category by Joan Abbott and and judged the **Best Overall Photograph 2013**
Below: Winner of the 'People in Wild Places' category by Mick Fox. *The Lads on the descent of Great End by The Band.*



The 2013 KFF Photographic Competition



Above: Winner of the 'Something Humourous' category by Joan Abbott. *Before the New Year All Terrain Toboggan Trials.*
Below left: Winner of the 'Lakeland Fells' category by Mick Fox. *Barn near Hayeswater Gill.*
Below right: Winner of the 'Sunset' category by Mick Fox. *Fence silhouette on Pen-y-ghent*



A Very Wintry Skills Course

4-8th February 2013

Colin Jennings

Last Christmas I treated myself to an ice axe and crampons. 2012 passed swiftly and without me getting chance to get out and give them a go (with someone who could show me how to use them!)

Therefore I decided to get myself some winter know how and booked myself on a 5 day winter skills course at Glenmore Lodge near Aviemore.

I had not been to the Cairngorms before and really enjoyed the long drive North. I arrived in good time so managed to park near the Reindeer centre at Loch Morlich and have a fantastic fell run through the forest up to the pass of Ryvoan and over Meall a Buchaille (a mere bump at only 810m). The week was off to a great start and I hadn't even checked in yet!



Glenmore Lodge calls itself the National Outdoor Training Centre and has superb facilities including a climbing wall, gym, kayaking/swimming pool, lecture theatre, bar etc. It offers accommodation too so you can stay there even if you are not on one of their courses.

On our first morning we met our guide for the week, James (a chap who had led 2 Greenland trekking expeditions, climbs at Scottish Grade VI and has over 25yrs of mountain experience). The group was small, only 4 of us to one guide. We had a kit inspection and anything James was not sure about we could change at the stores and use for the week free of charge. My 14yr old leather boots which fit like carpet slippers were condemned and replaced by some stiff, nasty plastic things.

The first day saw a raging blizzard, 60mph winds gusting to 100mph and 100m visibility. The road up to Cairn Gorm ski centre was closed but eventually they let a few of our minibuses through. We managed a 5hr walk but kept fairly low down and practiced micro navigation in the knee deep snow!

The subsequent days covered use of ice axe and crampons including ice axe arresting, kicking in steps and snow/ice/slope assessment. The weather was very wintry all week and it snowed every day.

A highlight for me was walking into Coire an

t-Sneachda and climbing up onto the Cairn Gorm plateau. We navigated our way across to the summit and the weather station. It was amazing to see the horizontal sheets of ice almost 2 feet long sticking out from the weather masts. The conditions were wild, 60mph winds, 50m visibility, -9 degrees or -24 with the wind chill. It was hard to believe we were in the UK and not in Antarctica! It was particularly satisfying for me as this was my first Munro!



Every day we had to plan our days walk based on the avalanche risk and weather forecast. Almost all week the avalanche risk was very high and so during each days walk we were constantly assessing slope angle, snow condition, wind direction and temperature.

On the Thursday the avalanche risk was too high to walk anywhere around the Cairn Gorm plateau so we travelled West and walked up Carn Ban Mor. This is a quiet, beautiful Munro overlooking Loch Eanaich. We spotted Ptarmigan on the ascent, trying their best to make shallow nests in the snow. The summit was shrouded in mist but we descended





the snowy slope by sliding (glissading) using our ice axes to steer/brake. It was amazing to slide for several hundred metres and the view to appear out of the mist, magical!

The last day saw us back in Coire an t-Sneachda where we practised some climbing skills on hard ice and digging emergency snow shelters in the huge snow banks in there. This day had the best weather so there were over 150 climbers above us in the Coire, scrambling like little ants over all sorts of winter routes. The week flew by but I felt I had learnt an awful lot. The days were full and we also had evening lectures on subjects like winter navigation and avalanches.

I would recommend both the course and Glenmore Lodge to anyone. The level of knowledge and experience is second to none. I came back and went out and bought some new winter boots. Just need some more snow to use them in!

Half Term at High House - A Family Walk

8-14th February 2013

Adam Heseltine

Half term began with some surprisingly pleasant weather; no snow this time but nice warm sun and a slight breeze. Once again the Whiles, missing Jim, the Heseltines, the Lancasters, and the Walshes also missing the man of the house mark began their walk from Manesty accompanied by Alec.

It turned out to be a nice steady stroll over the hills going over Catbells and following the ridge over to High Spy; this presented some spectacular views that were enjoyed by many over a quick lunch. We then began our steep descent through the mine workings towards the bottom of the valley where the adults and children split up, the kids walking straight back to the hut via Seatoller and the Adults heading back to the cars and drove back.

A fire enjoyed in the evening along with dominoes and a fair share of wine and cheese made a great end to the trip.



Above: A great day out in the sun enjoyed by all.

Below: Superb view looking from Catbells into the Borrowdale Valley.



Working Weekend

8-10th March 2013

Work started in earnest on Friday morning when the gaping hole in the boundary wall (*top left*) which had proved so useful for getting the ATTs into the field on New Year's Eve was dealt with. The rubble was cleared back to the footings and then the wall was expertly rebuilt by the team of Gavin, Peter, and Clanger (*second and third left*).

Roger finally managed to refix his new owl nesting box (*bottom left*) - perhaps a little too late for this year's nesting season but the previous attempt in January, with his fingers numbed in the icy wind, had to be abandoned on safety grounds.

Work continued in the ladies washroom with some expert plastering and the finishing of the tiled skirting beneath the washbasins by Kevin (*the cool dude, bottom right*).

Some tidying up of the grounds was clearly needed - an area had been agreed for depositing ash from the stove a year or two back (we stopped using the track because of the risk to tyres from nails) but it had become the general dumping ground for building waste too, particularly gleaming white wall tiles. A team set to work with shovels and rakes and soon had the space level and tidy. There's room in fact for another car there now.

Most of the work is, once again, in the 'unsung' category of cleaning and painting inside. It's worth mentioning one of those jobs: The Common Room floor gets a regular mopping (perhaps once a week by departing groups) and it would have received the same this weekend but one eagle-eyed member (Maja) remembered that the tiles used to look brighter than their current appearance. She got on her knees with a scrubbing brush and began in one corner. The water turned black almost instantly - from an apparently clean floor! Soon a team of scrubbers (stop that giggling you lot) were powering their way across the floor, bringing a sparkle once more to the terracotta. Well done to that team and to everyone else not mentioned here that turned up and just got on with it.



THE 5TH KFF SCOTTISH HOTEL MEET

Fort William 17 - 22nd March 2013

including Midweek Walk No. 36

Twenty members spent five nights in the Alexandra Hotel in Fort William this year. The weather was superb, often sunny and with no rain. On the hills, however, it was very cold and there was much snow. Constant 60 mph winds and a considerable avalanche risk meant careful planning was essential and the 'successful ascent' tally was not high. Here's Roger Atkinson's account on behalf of what he calls the FORT WILLIAM "C" TEAM or perhaps the SEA-LEVEL TEAM. with 'interruptions' from Ellie Woodburn, Margaret Cooper and the editor:

SUNDAY 17TH MARCH

Ed: *There was some excitement on the journey north as a large 'dump' of snow across Southern Scotland surprised us and the highways people. Snowploughs were struggling to keep one lane open on the M74 and I turned off at Annandale Water services. We then discovered that the slip roads were blocked and we couldn't leave! We had a long wait before we could resume our journey. Other, wiser, travellers stayed with the snowploughs and found that by Hamilton the roads were clear again....*

MONDAY 18TH MARCH

Roger: Day one saw a large jolly party heading for Glen Roy and its parallel roads, the splendid ice age geological features along either flank of the glen, which make it worth a visit, travelling further up the glen we parked at Brae Roy Lodge and walked in the blustery wind up the glen, passing many more unusual geological features, as far as Luib-chonna, an isolated but cosy bothy and the impressive Eas Ban (White Falls) before a rather wandering reversal of the route took us to the welcome shelter of the cars.

Ed: *Hughie, Kevin, Mike, David, Ray, Norman and Mick tackled Beinn Bhan, 796 metres, from Glen Loy. The conditions were good for views but a strong cold wind whipped up spindrift and made it impossible to linger on the exposed summit ridge (top right).*

TUESDAY 19TH MARCH

Roger: On our second day, a reduced team headed for The Commando Memorial above Spean Bridge then via Clunes and Mile Dorcha (The Dark Mile) to park at Eas Chia-aig a waterfall at the foot of Loch Arkaig, the dub at the foot of the falls is named The Witches Pool, jokes were made! Our route took us through pleasant woodland along the southern shore of Loch Arkaig then over open ground to another bothy, Inver Mallie, here we were welcomed by the sole occupant, an American originally from West Virginia (No, he didn't know Mike Goff). We joined him for a chat in front of a log fire and took the opportunity to enjoy lunch out of the wind before reversing our route to the cars.

Ed: *Hughie, Norman, David, Mike and Ray climbed Sgurr na h-Eanchainne, 791 metres, a fine peak just above the Corran ferry in Ardgor. Mick, Clare and Graham attempted Garbh Bheinn, 876 metres (second right), but were turned back near the summit by the conditions.*

Ellie: Five of us (Sheila, Lynn, Joan, Margaret and Ellie) decided to go up to the snow level via the Gondola on Aonach Mor (*third right*). We thought the views from the gondola were good but when we reached the restaurant the views were fantastic! After coffees we headed to the furthest viewpoint. The snow was quite deep in places as the wind had made it drift and it was so bitterly cold it felt and looked as if we were trudging in the Arctic! When we reached the viewpoint it was so clear we could see for miles, down to the lochs in one direction and the solid flank of Ben Nevis in the other. We hurried back, watching the skiers as we walked. We thawed out at the restaurant, surreptitiously ate our sandwiches and only one of us unable to resist a mulled wine!

WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH

Roger: Wednesday saw just four of us, the ladies had taken the train to Mallaig, trying to spoil ourselves with coffee to start the day at Glen Finnan but to no avail, every attempt was met with "We're shut" So coffeeless we walked the track on the south east shore of Loch Shiel (*bottom right*), passing what we assumed to be planned heather burning but seeing the news of uncontrolled wild fires shortly after we returned to Kendal "I'm not so sure". We were passed on the unsurfaced track by several cars and when looking at the map





it would appear that it makes it way from Glen Finnan to Strontian, close to twenty miles which must make it one of the longest stretches of unsurfaced road available to ordinary cars in the country, although it is probably a trespass to use it. The return journey opened up excellent views of the snow clad Monroes beyond the Glen Finnan Viaduct.

Ed: Ray Mike and David drove to Kinlochleven for an attempt on (I think) Sgur Eilde Mhor but the combination of deteriorating weather and short daylight hours forced a retreat. I set off alone from Corriechoille, determined to climb Cruach Innse and Sgurr Innse, but was pulled up short by 'the old war-wound' and the worsening weather decided me against continuing too.

Margaret: Having enjoyed our train trip to Mallaig last year, seven of us ladies 'Joan, Ellie, Clare, Val, Margaret, Jean and myself – decided upon a repeat journey. We were up with the birds and on our way by 8.30am, with a sunny day and great views to enjoy. There were numerous sightings of deer en route and the driver's slowing down for photo opportunities was appreciated.

On arrival we had to have the excellent coffee and scones remembered from last year. Refreshed we embarked on a circular walk ("The Midweek Walk") around Mallaig. Climbing away from the town (top left), we encountered spectacular views of the harbour, with Eigg and Rum in view and the sunlight sparkling on the snowy Cuillins.

The track headed for a couple of small lochs – Loch Nostarie and Loch Eiragoraidh - a five mile hike. There was a very excessive style to climb near the loch (second left), accessing a convenient picnic spot overlooking the water, where we spotted a heron and a couple of large birds of prey (eagles!) circling overhead.

The track eventually led us down to the old road at Glasnacardoch, where we saw coltsfoot, gorse, daffodils and primroses flowering earlier than their counterparts in England. Returning to Mallaig there was even time for a spot of retail therapy and after a very satisfactory day we headed for home.



THURSDAY 21ST MARCH

Roger: Our last day saw the restoration of the initial large jolly party whose aim was to walk the forest trails in lower Glen Loy but we were foiled by footpath closures due to forestry work. But not to be deprived we crossed the road and followed the Caledonian Canal north, our first stop was to view one of the original Telford swing bridges and to be told its history by an enthusiastic bridge keeper, from here we passed through Gairloch to the lighthouse at the foot of Loch Lochy which made a idyllic, sunny picnic site with delightful views up the loch. The return journey was enlivened by one of a group of potential Olympic canoeists being blown out of his boat by the downdraft from a low flying military helicopter, I don't think he was as amused as us. However the "icing on the cake" was the views onto the north face of Ben Nevis in full winter conditions, a fitting end to a grand four days in the highlands.

Ed: Hughie, Norman, Mike Ray and David successfully climbed Cruach Insse, 857 metres (third left). Thank goodness! With so many hills not done I was starting to think we should be renamed 'K Fellfailures' They met an interesting character too (see cover photograph). Kevin, Clare and I decided that we'd 'have a look' at the hill that had defeated us two years ago, Mam nan Gulain. The weather in Fort William was glorious but we headed in the wrong direction; Glencoe and Loch Leven lay dark under a black sky and a fierce wind rushed down the valley from the east. The tops were hidden. We quickly retreated and enjoyed a delightful day walking the sunlit towpath of the Caledonian Canal.



FRIDAY 22ND MARCH

Ed: Would the journey south be interrupted by snow too? Blizzards were forecast for Southern Scotland again but in fact the only difficulty was a few hundred yards of drifted snow on the summit of the Shap road. We all got home safely after another fine Hotel Meet. Where to next year? Make sure you let the Social Subcommittee know your preference.



Bottom left : This year's Fort Bill Team on the last night.

Back row - Mick, Norman, Kevin, Ray
 Third row - Roger, Graham, Hugh, Mike, David
 Second row - Val, Irene, Margaret A, Lynne, Margaret C, Fred, Jean
 Front row, seated - Clare, Joan, Sheila, Ellie

Easter Sunday was one of those days that will always be remembered with a smile – and a laugh out loud at the photographs. The Lancasters had come back from their 3 tarns walk the day before, (Sty Head, Sprinkling and Angle Tarns), with tales and photos of deep firm snow and frozen tarns.

A high weather system promised sunny, still, settled skies and Maja's suggestion for the family walk was to take the youngsters up to see Sty Head Tarn, looking beautifully ethereal in its frozen state. The plan quickly grew legs and later that morning, a party set off with pockets of Easter chocolate and a varied selection of sledges, in search of some epic sledging.

The group consisted of the Heseltine family - Mike, Pam, Claire and Adam; the While family – Jim, Maja, Peter, Ted and of course Bob; the Walsh family – Mark, Claire, Matthew and Jessica; the Jennings – Colin, Matthew and Emma; the Lancaster family – Richard, Jan, and Duncan (Colette had stayed at High House swotting for an exam, having walked the day before); Alec Reynolds, Stuart 'Clanger' Bell and Frank Slater. We set off for Stockley Bridge, pausing to admire the stunning beauty of the icicles and snow adorning the freezing flows. Some of the boys stole nearer and nearer the water's edge, daring each other on. From the gate, we began our ascent and encountered a group doing a sterling job clearing the snow from the drainage channels. Claire H, who had also arrived at High House with a stack of revision books, came part of the way before reluctantly turning back to more studious endeavours. The rest of us passed the larches between Greenhow Knott and Taylorgill and soon afterwards contact with the outside world was affirmed with a flurry of teenage texting.

The footbridge over Styhead Gill was marooned above the frozen beck and a blanket of sparkling snow. No need for the bridge today! Within a short time, we were at Sty Head Tarn, and the steep, snow-covered flanks of Seathwaite Fell behind. We quickly crossed to the foot of the slope and a good hour or more of increasingly high and increasingly fast sledging ensued. The fun was infectious and eventually everyone had a go, providing excitement to the sledgers, great sport to Bob (the While's dog!), photo opportunities and entertainment to all.

Those with sledges experimented with different methods – sitting or lying and deftly avoided the rocks at the foot of the slope. Several mums produced orange survival bags and these were passed around and shared as enthusiastically as the sledges. Frank left the main group at this point, and went on to explore the environs of Great Gable. He could soon be seen striding up the skyline, using his walking poles and going at a cracking pace.

The rest of us, our booty boxes and flasks now emptied, and our childhood needs satisfied, delighted in watching Colin and Matthew execute the most extreme sledging of the day – appearing from over the skyline for their final descent. We then gathered up our gear and happily descended back to Stockley Bridge and High House for some home baked cakes. Mark commented that he'd been concerned the Family Walk might be a bit boring for people – far from it!

Top: Ted While

Second right: Jan Lancaster, Claire Walsh, Stuart Bell, Richard Lancaster, Jim While, Bob, Pam Heseltine, Mja While (audience torn between watching winter sports and rescue helicopter)

Third right: Pam Heseltine, Claire Walsh & Jan Lancaster

Bottom right: Mike Heseltine

Below: Jim While



Easter at High House

27th March - 1st April 2013

Jan Lancaster



A Walk from Dalton in Furness to Ulverston Saturday 6th April 2013



It was a fine morning. Too fine, I confess to thinking, to be tootling about on coastal lowlands when the hills, still streaked with snow, beckoned. Still, I knew bits of the terrain and liked the idea of joining them up with the benefit of Alec's local knowledge so off we went. Only three of us boarded at the bus station but as the bus carried us south and west it picked up more and more members until, by the time we arrived in Dalton's centre, the party consisted of:

Alec Reynolds, Gordon Pitt, Margaret and Roger Atkinson, Josh Weeks, Jean and Fred Underhill, Val Calder, Frank Haygarth, Helen Speed, Mike Walford, Caroline Walsh, Clare and Mick Fox.

Alec led us out of the town by a rather unpromising little lane under the railway (where there was much comment on dog-owner's responsibilities - you get the picture) but never mind, we were soon striding out joyfully across the fields above Standing Tarn (*top left*) under the big blue sky.

Fields and almost forgotten lanes lay between us and Little Urswick and The Cistercian Way follows the obvious line until unaccountably veering off to cut across the corner of Little Urswick Crags. It's a tiny parcel of sheep-cropped field, punctuated by little limestone outcrops, a delight which feels like it should be an Open Access area but isn't. So thank you to the Cistercians and to Alec for taking us that way. The path wound down into the village where we crossed into a farmyard that could do with a good spring-clean before an exciting encounter with a huge and high-spirited carthorse. He may have just been glad of the company but we didn't like to risk it so we hurried on as he pranced noisily about his field. Above the equine display, the Coniston fells shimmered in the sunlight (*second left*).

The Way skirts around Urswick's pyramidal school and heads towards the church. Several sheep took a liking to the chairman here, a feeling so profound that they followed him *through a kissing gate* into the churchyard. "What's up with the beasts today?" He had great fun chasing them back through that gate into their field.

We skirted Urswick Tarn and by then tummies were rumbling. The waterside benches were occupied by fishermen so our leader urged us on, up the big hill of the day (a good 150 feet of ascent) to a comfortable roadside picnic spot on lovely Birkrigg Common (*third left*). The tiny quarry faces there have a few recorded routes on them and the Ed remembered soloing some of them in a stolen lunchtime half-hour many years ago. Where does the time go?

We gave up waiting for an ice-cream van to arrive and moved on across the northern edge of the common along sheep-cropped tracks (*title picture*) and a walled lane into sleepy Bardsea. A number of towers, follies, summer houses, appeared, all tokens of an estate and of course money. We had entered the bounds of Conishead Priory and soon its glittering new building, the Buddhist temple, came into view (*top right*). More importantly (for us) the tea shop around the

back came into view too (*second right*) and so we basked in the sun for half an hour and filled ourselves up with tea, cakes and ice cream. Refreshed then, we strolled on down to the shore and its fine wide views of Cartmel Sands (*below*). We walked in this dreamlike landscape, northwards now, on the Cumbria Coastal Way (we'd left the Cistercians back in Great Urswick). After passing the impressive artificial headland of the dismantled railway the scenery declined as we crossed the industrial estate between Salt Cotes and Canal Foot - where it picked up again! No, not the pub, the views across the water. A mile or so of dead straight, but pleasant and very popular canal towpath, took us back to the main road and, within minutes a passing bus. Hurrying our farewells, we climbed aboard and relaxed...

There is a postscript: Just past Witherslack, the engine started to protest and the bus began to spray oil out of its back end. It took three quarters of an hour for a replacement to arrive but, hey ho, it had been a fine day and an interesting ramble and no-one seemed to mind the wait. Thanks Alec for sharing the walk.



Not Dove Crag

Midweek Walk No. 37

17th April 2013

Hugh Taylor

Tony & Sue Maguire, Colin & Val Hunter, David Birkett, Hugh Taylor, Norman Bell, Sam Bracken, and Les Ord.

Six members and three guests met at Brothers Water, and watched the rain sweeping down. With the milder weather came the rain, and the snow soon disappeared. With a poor forecast in mind, the correct decision was made to have coffee at Wilf's. Four then left for home, leaving five to walk via Hagg Wood with its daffodils and wood anemones, to Mikes Wood above Spring Hag for lunch. Then back via the delightful Elf Howe cottages and Scroggs Farm. Not the walk we intended but delightful nevertheless, and we didn't even get wet!

Right: The lovely lane on the approach to Middle and Low Elfhowe from Hall Lane.





Climbing (and Walking) for All

Hutton Roof Crag

25th April 2013

Clare Fox

This was our third evening walk to coincide with the climbers' first 'Climbing for All' evening. On each of the last two occasions only four members turned up to do the evening walk from Hutton Roof - could we do better this year?

Third time lucky this year as nine of us (John Peat, Roger Atkinson, Gordon Pitt, Joan Abbott, Ali Hodgson, Mike Palk, Kath Palk, who led the walk, Mick and myself) gathered at Hutton Roof church for the start of the walk. After a pretty miserable day the sun duly obliged and the evening was a beautiful sunny one, perfect for views.

So with a spring in our step and Spring in the air we all set off. Mick and Mike, said goodbye to us after a while as they headed for for the climbing crag. Where have all the climbers gone? I can remember evenings with at least a dozen enthusiastic folk looking forward to their first outdoor climb of the year!

It turned out to be a really beautiful evening and the views of the Howgills and the Lakeland fells were stunning. The walking was easy but after recent showers the ground underfoot was pretty muddy and slippery in places, luckily we all remained upright.

Compared to our previous walks there were no signs of orchids this year and the primroses and violets were in scarce supply, their appearances obviously delayed by the long cold winter.

After walking on the limestone link path and with Farleton Knott in front of us, we turned left and leaving our views behind us headed for Uberash Plain passing through the avenue of trees, mainly hazel, and although spring flowers were in short supply the gorse, as usual, flowered. It seems to bloom cheerfully all the year round.

We made our way uphill passing the limestone crags and pavements and were soon rewarded with views of distant farmland basking in the light of the setting sun, truly lovely. We made our way over to the climbing crag to rejoin our stalwart climbers who had really enjoyed their first evening outdoors.

At the end of the walk as we gathered around the cars a lady in a car stopped and handed us Hutton Roof Village Combined Newsletter which was advertising the Fell Race and Country Fair on 25th May. It sounds like a fun event with lots of activities such as archery, bungee trampolines, craft demonstrations and even 'Hen Racing'. We all said our goodbyes and agreed that it was a great way to start our summer season of evening walks. Thanks once again to Kath for the walk.

PS from the Ed. *Mike and I didn't bother taking ropes out of our packs; we soloed some of the easier routes on the warm sunlit rock. The evening was a bit of a milestone for me; the first time I had climbed since January 2012, apart from a couple of short practice sessions at the Wall. I wondered how the hip would react but it was fine. In fact on the following Thursday, another fine evening, I returned to Hutton Roof with Val, Kevin, Tina and Frank. As well as doing more easy climbs we brought out a rope and some of us tackled the leg-stretching testpiece, Pegasus. Things are looking up!*



An Evening Walk "Kitmere and Rigmaden"

7th May 2013

Kitmere? Rigmaden? I confess I'd never heard either name before. This was clearly going to be another of Krysia's esoteric outings, exploring what, to many of us, are blank areas on our mental maps. The Grid Reference and OS Landranger 97 helped: there they were: both names on the western banks of the River Lune, opposite Middleton Fell.....

It was a fine evening, warm and still. The sky arched big and blue over the fields north of Old Town and it was no surprise to see a good turnout: Krysia, Margaret and Roger, Jean, Val and Colin, Sue and Tony, Frank, David, Val, Clare and Mick.

We crossed fields to Kitmere which is, as the name suggests, a tarn, hidden from public view and on this evening still and silent. Visiting it and the crumbling boathouse on its shore (*top right*) involved a minor trespass. Why the name? Krysia explained: *Kit Wilson was the squire of Rigmaden Park. His second name was Wyndham: hence Wyndammere, another tarn nearby. Kit's talents were apparently limitless - he could cure sick tigers and had a pet otter that he trained to follow him. He had the first car in Westmorland and his house was the second in the North to have electricity installed. We even have him to thank for our dairy heritage - he introduced Friesian cows to England. He was an early tombstoner - he travelled often but when he was at home he was known to enjoy jumping off Devil's Bridge.*

Back on the footpath and the right side of the law, we descended across fields bright with fresh spring growth while before us Middleton Fell shimmered in the evening sun (*second right*). Back into the shade of Park Wood and thence onto the road we went. A lady stood at the junction waiting for a lift. We paused to chat and just then the lady's lift arrived. "I've brought a few friends with me", she said, smirking, as she climbed in, waving her arms to include all 13 of us. I didn't catch the driver's response.

From the roadside we peered through the hedges at Rigmaden Park, a fine house in a glorious situation. It was originally built in 1825 to the design of Francis and George Webster of Kendal. It became derelict but remained in the Wilson family, along with its 2,000 acre estate. In 1992 the house was restored and now looks as good as the day it was built.

Down the road we went and then up across a field and through woodland (too soon for bluebells this year) to Krysia's dream house - a solitary dwelling with lovely views across the Lune valley. Derelict now and its stone walls peeling apart at the corners, it will never be occupied again. The outhouse at the back was a two-seater (*third right*) and still had a bucket under one seat. No paper though, so no-one used it. In a wall recess to one side (for a candle?) was a little nest, occupied. The blackbird nearly took the writer's eye out when it shot out in alarm. I hope it returned soon to its eggs. Easy strolling across fields with fine views southwards took us to an imposing barn, named as Mansergh High by the OS (*bottom right*). A track uphill took us to the minor road which led, in less than a couple of miles, back to the cars. The stroll back was illumined by gorgeous views of the setting sun (*below*) and the evening was made complete (need you ask?) by gathering together for a couple of pints in the Station Inn at Oxenholme. Another fine walk. Thank you Krysia.



The KFF Small Isles Meet

10-15th May 2013



In a season of changeable weather you take your chances and of course sometimes you lose. The first day was an unpromising start - but not for everyone. The island of Muck doesn't have much to offer the mountain-lover and a walk from end to end just got us a good wetting. Fortunately there is a cosy little cafe with a stove so we were content to dry out there and wait for our return ferry. For Paul, the day had been richly rewarding; not only did he point out the call of the corncrake for us all to hear but, after much patient waiting, he managed to spot it and indeed take a photograph. An ambition realised on day one!

Eigg was rather more promising and we sailed there in bright sunlight. On arrival several of us dashed, by the 'secret' route through the towering cliffs above our quirky lodgings (*top left*) to the summit of Sgorr an Fharaidh.

An Sgurr, which had looked so fine in the sunshine (*inset photo*), was on the programme for the following day. Ruth describes the event on the opposite page. The poor day turned into a glorious evening and we enjoyed the superb view of Rum in ever-changing light while we dined at the smart little restaurant (*title photo*).

We are destined to be amongst the last few people to stay at Kinloch Castle on Rum (*middle left*) - a range of portacabins is being prepared for future visitors, with a purpose-built hostel coming if money becomes available. The first day was fine but windy and the highest peaks of the Cuillin were swathed in cloud all day. Nevertheless, Rose and Paul reached the summit of Askival (*bottom left*), and spotted eagles

(and the remains of their dinner - shearwater bones). Angie explored the island with her sketchpad on a hired bike and Hughie, Ruth, Clare and Mick climbed Orval in clear weather (*bottom right*).

Back on the mainland, five of us extended our trip a little by staying in the excellent Glenfinnan sleeping-car hostel. See opposite.



A Tale of Two Sgurr

telling of two walks undertaken on the trip to the Small Isles

Ruth Joyce

1. Sunday 12 May. The Sgurr on Eigg. Mick, Clare, Hugh and Ruth There is a fine line between optimism and forlorn hope. Which side we erred on that day, dear reader, I leave you to decide.

It all started with the promise of filter coffee at the cafe 3 miles away down by the ferry, prior to an assault on the nearby Sgurr. A trudge in the rain and the cloud well down, but what the hell it was wet on the beaches, it was wet in the fields, it was wet on the hills. There was no avoiding the weather. May as well set off and see if the forecast for improvement later was accurate. So we set off. And reviewed tactics. And returned to wait for the minibus to the ferry.

From the cafe there is a very fine view of the sea and rocky shore. I suppose it was there that day, as the cloud was not quite down at sea level. I only recollect the coffee, which was hot, in contrast to the outside world.

Out we went, up a track to gain a little height through some woodland and then turn right through a field to gain a gravelled track on the far side. Turning right, after a short distance we picked up a vague path which left the track on our left and led uphill which seemed a promising start. Clare noted a Christmas tree on the skyline a few hundred yards away up the grassy slope. Nothing further distant was visible through the clag.

Soon we joined a more distinct path, which turned out to have red dots on. From there on in, the best views we got were of the next red dot. A giant join the dots game in which the final picture remained a mystery. Vague hump beyond vague hump. Eventually a particularly vague hump hove into view. It must be the Sgurr. We skirted round it clockwise. Progress was measured by the increasing wetness of feet. We did get to the top; Hugh took the photos at the trig point to prove it. Never having been there before I had no idea which way we were facing or what we couldn't see. Apparently it's well worth seeing.

Down we went without further ado, pausing only once to stand in the lee of a rock. We unpacked butties, sheltering from the wind which was still dragging ragged clouds up through gaps between the crags. Onward then from red dot to red dot, bog to bog, puddle to puddle, rock to rock – why was I enjoying this?

I spotted a Christmas tree down a tiny path leading to the left from the track. Remember the Christmas tree, dear reader? We turned towards it, anticipating a short cut, and so it was that we quickly gained fields and woodland and then the road. Back along the road for 3 or 4 miles to our base at Cleadales.

The weather was beginning to clear. Desultory debate as to whether it was clearer only because we were lower down. And whether the pleasure of an improvement would be marred by the sight of the Sgurr we had so thoroughly failed to experience earlier. Could it be said to be mocking us? On we went in good spirits. The

sky was turning blue, the cuckoo was singing, the flowers glowed on the banks in shafts of sunlight. Clothes began to dry on our backs. Yes, the Sgurr was revealed.

2. Thursday 16 May. Sgurr na Utha, near Glenfinnan. Mick, Clare and Ruth

Homeward bound now, our party was breaking up to head in separate directions. The bunkhouse in the railway carriage at Glenfinnan was the final stopover for Hugh and Angie. Mick, Clare and I had booked an extra night there which gave the opportunity to set out for a fine day's walking. Mick selected Sgurr na Utha. Now, I have learned some facts; this is a Corbett, and the "th" in Utha is silent. I have forgotten the refinements on naming subsidiary summits of Corbetts, which Mick did explain to me, but I can tell you that we reached one of those too. While I am showing off like a swot, I can also tell you that a bealach is a col in Scottish. We headed for a bealach when we set off with Mick blazing the trail and Clare and I using some of our breath talking which is the only reason we did not keep up all the time.

Up the forestry track as far as we could. Keeping feet dry was a welcome change. Clare demonstrated the trick of gauging height gained by holding out an arm to take a sight line along it to a lower neighbouring summit on the other side of the valley. We kept practising, judging by increments how far up we were relative to its flank. Mick commented he had never seen so many Nazi salutes. The track ended without giving any indication as to its purpose in going up so high. We headed off to the left, negotiating rough ground and confident that the weather would remain fine. No sun, but very good visibility. An excellent day to be out in.

Amazingly quickly we were far above our puny neighbour. Meanwhile we had seen rocky waterfalls, skirted numerous boggy stretches up to the bealach (have I spelt it right?), and admired bits of mountain, both mineral and vegetable, beneath our feet. There were cairns too which we followed for a while. Apparently this is very un-Scottish and not the done thing, as cairns could turn the wilds of Scotland into a playground for the tame and feeble folk who wander the Lakeland fells along marked paths.

There was plenty of time to doodle about at the top of our summits, looking at views from every direction. Knoydart, the Ben Nevis range, a few lochs and lots of other mountains – they were all there and if I could name them all you would get bored with the long list. What I will mention though is that we could see clear across to the Small Isles. Yes, there they all were; Eigg, Rum and Muck, clear of cloud, and looking as insignificant as croutons floating on soup. Strange to think that while we were on them seeking their ridges and summits they had such dramatic presence.

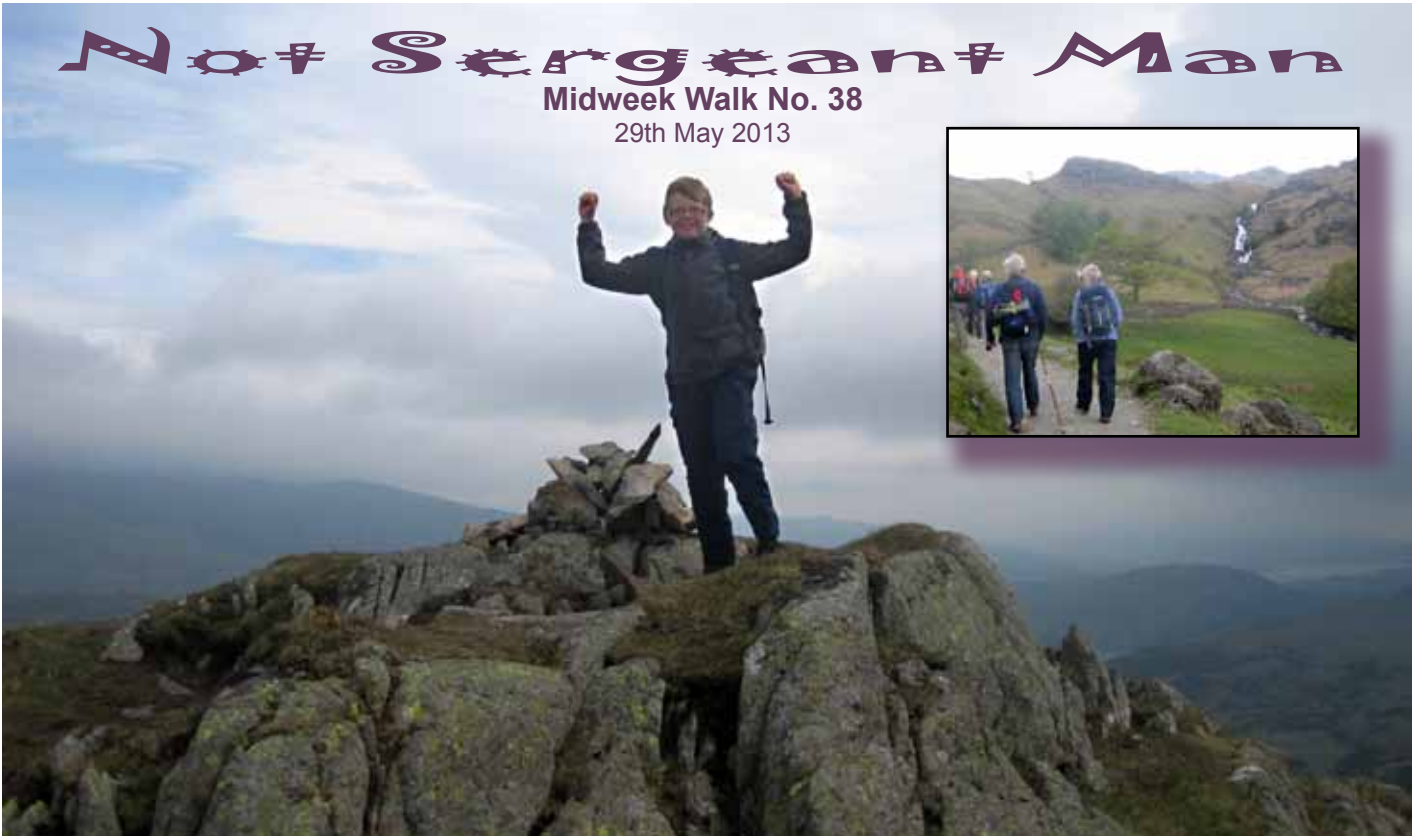
Below: On the two Sgurr. You can work out which is which.



Not Sergeant Man

Midweek Walk No. 38

29th May 2013



Holidays and grandchildren kept quite a few regulars away but crafty Hugh drafted in some reserves, Norman Bell, Sam Bracken and Les Ord, to keep the numbers up. Not to be outdone, Roger brought along an apprentice Fellfarer, young Josh, so that with Clare and myself we had a respectable 8 gathered in the coffee shop in Grasmere. The intended objective of the day, Sergeant Man, was changed during the walk. Here's Josh's account of our day:

"I went with Fellfarers on a Wednesday walk. We caught the bus to Grasmere and waited at a café for Hughie and some of his friends. After that we went down a little road leading to a path up to Tarn Crag. As we made our ascent to Tarn Crag we saw a big tarn called Easedale Tarn. Just in front of Easedale Tarn, we saw Sour Milk Gill. We slowly made our way to another tarn called Codale Tarn. This was where we had lunch. We finally made it to the top of Tarn Crag. I was the first one there. It was rather windy. We started slowly to make our way down the ridge and into Far Easedale. Once we got to the bottom we found a vegetarian hotel called Lancrigg. Grandad bought me a chocolate ice-cream he said the ingredients were milk and traditional SHEEP POO!!! Later on we made it back just in time for another ice-cream from Clare before we got the bus home. Thanks Hughie and to everyone else who came."

Josh Weeks



SOCIAL SUB-COMMITTEE NEWS

There's a packed programme of activities for you this late summer and autumn...from bike rides to camping weekends and walks to train journeys. For more information about these events, see the calendar and notes below.

Don't forget the Borrowdale Fell Race too - if anyone fancies volunteering to marshal, please contact Peter Goff.

You'll know that the nights are drawing in, as the first slide show of the year will be on 15th October. Following their wonderfully entertaining talk on their trip to the Andes, Rose and Paul will be kicking off the slide show season with a talk on their trip to Pakistan. Should be good!

And a reminder about the ceilidh too... Saturday 23 November is the date (surely there won't be snow this year!?) and Hugh will be leading a band of musical Fellfarers. Tickets will be on sale from the social committee (from August) and the price will be £5 for adults and £2.50 for children (same as last year). There will be a bar at the Rugby Club so there's no need to bring your own drinks but do bring your friends! Should be a great evening, so come along and put your best feet forward!

The next meeting of the social committee will be in August and our thoughts will be turning to the 80th anniversary of the club in 2014. If you have any suggestions about suitable celebrations, do let us know.

Enjoy your summer.

Clare, Joan, Tony and Mike



Last minute reminder:
Walter's Water Weekend

Side Farm, Ullswater
Patterdale (GR NY 397 167)

5-7th July 2013

A perfect base for all water sports and for walking on the surrounding fells. Full details were given in the last issue.

No booking required.

Cost £8 per person and £2 per car per night.

THE SWALE GORGE, SWINNER GILL AND KISDON

See what 4,000 lead miners can do to a landscape!

Sunday 21st July 2013

6-7 miles with 1500 ft of ascent but with easier options.

Meet at 11 am in the car park in Muker SD910978 (pay and display).

If you want to make a weekend of it there is either camping at Usha Gap (between Muker and Thwaite) with an excellent pub in Muker or Pam and Maja will make floors / gardens / spare beds available to anyone who fancies a walk around Richmond on the Saturday and an overnight with us. Tel Pam: 01748 823558 or Maja: 01748 821834

Lakes Camping Weekend

Santon Bridge, Wasdale

Friday 9th to Sunday 11th August 2013

Santon Bridge, the gateway to Wasdale and ideally placed also for access to exquisite Eskdale and peaceful Ennerdale, this location has been requested by members for some time.

It's perfect for ticking off those remote western Wainwrights, walking or running the big hills, fishing (without leaving the campsite!), canoeing, climbing or just enjoying the superb scenery - and it's just one minutes walk from the pub! The site is:

The Old Post Office Campsite
Grid Reference NY 110 016
Tel: 019467 26286 / 26125

The cost is £18.50 a night for 2 people plus car and tent. Early booking (directly with the campsite please) is advised. A deposit is required.



All Aboard La'al Ratty



Saturday 7th September 2013

Meet aboard the 09.23 train from Arnside (free parking) to Ravenglass
or:

Meet at Ravenglass for the 11.30
La'al Ratty journey to Eskdale.

There will be 4 hours in Eskdale for a walk, a beer, tea, buns - or any combination of these!

Return times: leave Eskdale at 15.50 and then catch the 17.03 train to Arnside.

However.....the train timetable changes on 7 September so it's probably worth checking nearer the time. Any changes will be posted on the club website.

Tickets are available from Northern Rail. The current all-inclusive fare from Carnforth Station is £23.70. Please buy your own tickets - it is possible to use railcards but there are no discounts for groups. If you drive there, the return fare on La'al Ratty is £12.80.

Please let Mike Palk know if you are interested.

THE ROBERTSON LAMB HUT Great Langdale.

Friday 18th to Sunday 20th October 2013

COME AND STAY AT THE WAYFARERS CLUB HUT, THE ONLY CLIMBING HUT IN THE LAKES WHICH IS OLDER THAN OURS!

It is only half a mile to beer and food at the New Dungeon Ghyll, a perfect base for exploring the Langdale Pikes, Crinkle Crag and Bowfell and for climbing on Raven Crag. Scout Crag, suitable for climbing beginners, is just across the road.

The hut is on the south side of the road at Grid Reference SD 304 066.

More information can be found at

http://www.wayfarersclub.org.uk/robertson_lamb_hut.html

There are 12 beds available but booking is essential and some beds have already been taken so don't delay! The cost is £10 pppn. To book, call Mike Palk.



KFF CLUB EVENTS JULY - OCTOBER 2013

Where the contact person's phone number is not given below, full contact details can be found on page 2

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

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

Weekend 5-7th ***Water Weekend** – Camping at Side Farm Patterdale, Ullswater. (GR NY 397 167)
No pre-booking. Nightly rate £8 per person and £2 per car. Info: Tony Walshaw or Clare Fox

Tuesday 16th **Evening Walk** - Yealand Storrs. 3.5 miles.
Meet 6.30pm. Road junction west of Yealand (GR 494 761) Leader: Peter Goff

Sunday 21st ***Sunday Walk** - The Swale Gorge, Swinner Gill and Kisdon from Muker. 6-7 miles. Ascent 1500 ft.
Meet 11am. Car park in Muker (GR SD 910 978) (pay and display). Leader: Maja While Tel: 01748 821834

Wednesday 24th **Mid Week Walk** - Circuit of Devoke Water. 5.5 miles.
Meet 10.30am. Road junction, Birker Fell (GR 171 977) Leader: Colin Hunter 01539 730177.

Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone Welcome. Info: Mike Palk

August *(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 13th. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)*

Month 2nd-31st **High House** is booked for Fellfarers, including:

Saturday 3rd **Borrowdale Fell Race** – Marshals required please. Names to Peter Goff 01524 736990

Tuesday 6th **Evening Walk** – Hampsfell via Broughton and Bishops Allotment. 4 - 5 miles.
Meet 6.30pm. Road to Hampsfield Hall (GR 392 805) Leader: Tony Walshaw

Weekend 9-11th **Lakes Camping Meet** - The Old Post Office Campsite Santon Bridge (GR NY 110 016)
Booking essential: £18.50 a night for 2 people, car and tent Tel: 019467 26286 / 26125

Saturday 17th **Bike Ride** - Lune Valley . 20 miles. Flattish terrain.
Meet 1.00pm. Force Bridge, Sedgewick (GR 507 868). Leader: Roger Atkinson

Wednesday 28th **Midweek Walk** - The Cartmel Peninsula. 5 - 6 miles. Easy/moderate gradients.
Meet 11am. Cartmel Racecourse (pay + display) (GR 376 786) Leader: John Peat 015395 32244

Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone Welcome. Info: Mike Palk

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

Sunday 1st **High House** is booked for Fellfarers (End of August club booking - leave Monday 2nd).

Saturday 7th ***Railway Journey** - West Coast Line to Ravenglass then on La'al Ratty into Eskdale.
Main line: 9.23am train from Arnside. La'al Ratty: 11.50 from Ravenglass. Full details page 19

Weekend 13-15th **Working Weekend**

Wednesday 25th **Midweek Walk** - Bram Rigg and Arant Haw, the Howgills, 7.5 miles.
Meet 10.30am. Howgill Church (GR 633 950) Leaders: Irene + Graham Ramsbottom 01539 725808

Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. A different crag every week. Everyone Welcome. Info: Mike Palk

October *(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 1st. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)*

Sunday 6th **Sunday Walk** - The Warcop Military Range. Route decided on the day.
Meet 10.30am. Murton Car Park (GR730 220). Leader: Mike Palk

Tuesday 15th **Slide Show** - "Walking in the Throne Room of Gods". Rose and Paul East.
Meet 7.30pm. The Strickland Arms. Sandwiches. Guests welcome.

Weekend 18-20th ***Hut Meet** - The Robertson Lamb Hut, Langdale. 12 beds available at £10 pppn.
(GR 304 066) Booking is essential. Info and booking: Mike Palk

Week 25-31st **High House** is booked for Fellfarers for half term. (Leave Friday 1st Nov.)

Wednesday 30th **Midweek Walk** – Dove Crag circular from Brothers Water. 8 miles. Ascent approx 2,000 ft
Meet 10am. Car park north of Brothers Water (GR 403 134). Leader: Tony Maguire 01539 232597

Every Thursday Evening Climbing for All. Kendal Climbing Wall. Everyone Welcome. Info: Mike Palk