

A black and white photograph of a steep, layered rock face. Two climbers are visible on the left side, ascending the rock. The rock has distinct horizontal strata and some vertical cracks. Sparse vegetation is visible at the bottom of the frame.

the
Fellfarer

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Number 34

Ed's bit

It's been an exciting spring and early summer at High House; a place where "nothing ever happens...but something always *is* happening." Birds nesting and plans for more improvements to the building and, especially, the grounds. You'll find information on all that elsewhere in this newsletter.

I think there's been a good mix of social events so far this year, as well as news percolating through of members' holidays in interesting places. The trouble is that I've been away a fair bit myself and there seem to be few members volunteering information this time round. So:

- Forgive me if this issue contains more than usual amounts of non-club stuff. Hope it's interesting anyway.
- I also apologise for the lateness of it's publication. Same reason.
- A big thank you to those who *have* contributed. There is always someone who springs a surprise article or other item on me. It always fills me with delight and, to be honest, it's what keeps me going.

So, you may ask, what am I leading up to? I think you know.

I'm also not going to be around much before the next issue and I will be relying heavily on people *volunteering* articles, stories, drawings etc. Please, if you have a good, or interesting, or amusing, or dreadful, experience that you'd like to share, don't just wait until you have an audience in the pub; write it down and send it to me. I know that it's the stuff that members write that gives most pleasure to everyone else. Give me the embarrassment of not being able to fit all of your contributions into 20 pages next time. I could live with that.

Anyway, hope you enjoy the read.

Ed.

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Cover Photo: Val and Peter climbing in the Moelwyns
Contents Photo: Convivial evening in the bar, Rhyd DDU



The committee would like to share extracts from a couple of letters, which the Hut Booking Secretary received from visiting clubs, with you:

From Burnley Mountaineering Club, dated 27.4.04:

"..... No report sheet as the Hut was in pristine condition. High House gets better every time we visit; it's going to be like the Dorchester Hotel before too long.

Please pass on my praises to those responsible for the splendid library; it's a better collection than mine.

On behalf of our Club I thank you most sincerely for the weekends stay at High House and look forward to our return....."

And from Martin Budget, dated 19.4.04:

".....I hope we left the house in almost better condition than we found it as, being all medical professionals and teachers, we know the meaning of clearing up!

We met two club members when we first arrived who were very helpful indeed and made us feel most welcome-this was a delightful start....."

Thank you to the two members-we know who they are but I will spare them their blushes.

News from the Committee

First of all: Our best wishes go to our President, **John Peat**, and his new knee. Hope to see you out & about soon John.

The Committee hopes that you are all there at the **70th birthday party** for High House on Saturday 24th July. The chairman is busy icing hundreds of cupcakes and preparing vats of strawberry jelly, the editor is sticking expensive labels on the bottles of cheap British sparkling wine and the Social Secretary has bought special coloured birthday papers for his roll-ups. So you can't say we haven't made an effort.

The committee is investigating the possibility of obtaining a grant towards the cost of **rebuilding the stone walls** which run around the edge of "our" land. The chairman has had a meeting with the local manager of the National Trust and received a favourable response. If a joint application from the Trust and ourselves to the Lottery Fund were to be successful, it would mean committing some of our money (and some of the National Trust's) to the project. If unsuccessful, we might consider doing the work, in small stages, ourselves as a long-term project.

CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS 1. Following the successful work at "the bottom end" of the water supply-the new storage tank- we are now about to begin work at the top end-**the catchment pool and inlet in the beck** above High House. Design work is complete, materials are being ordered as we go to press, and work should start within the next month, date unknown as yet. If you like building dams and want to be part of the mid-week working party, call the chairman and let him know.

CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS 2. The new drainage ditch (last working weekend-see last issue of the Fellfarer) seems to be doing it's job of keeping the seepage from the fell off the track. We now plan to ensure that when the beck is full, any water washing over the half-way bridge is channelled back into the beck again, rather than running down the track. When this is completed we can think about making some improvements to the track itself to remove pot-holes and bumps. A mid-week working party will, in the next couple of weeks, be laying a raised (stone-faced) concrete section, a sort of '**sleeping policeman**' to divert this flood-water. Come and help if you can...and drive carefully up the track until you are used to the new bump.

The **new ditch**, although it is performing brilliantly, will need tending for a year or two until it 'settles down'. Cows have been in once and kicked sections of bank into the waterway. If you at High House, could you just take a few minutes to wander down and check that it's running clear?

The next major project inside the hut is the **improvement to the kitchen**. The idea of making the kitchen a cleaner and more attractive place than it is has been received with enthusiasm by many but the problem is that there are as many views on what the improvements should consist of as there are members! The committee proposes to bring a plan to the next **AGM** for discussion, with a view to implementing the scheme in 2005. It's important, therefore, that anyone who has a view on the subject should make his or her opinions known to the committee before the scheme is put together, i.e. as soon as possible, preferably by coming along to a meeting, or by putting something in writing -or even a drawing! Some of the options to consider are: Do we take out part of the wall between the kitchen and the common room to create a more open spacious feel; do we enlarge the kitchen at the expense of the common room; do we keep both electricity and gas for cooking; do we need another sink; can we improve on the present water boiler; do we replace the work-tops with stainless steel; do we need more worktop space; do we ensure that all crockery, cutlery etc is stored away in cupboards; how do we store mops and buckets; do we need to spread out the cooking points more; do we need an oven; can we improve the food storage system.....no doubt you can think of a few more questions that we need to answer. The point is that this is intended to be a once-in-a-lifetime project so we want to get it absolutely right first time (even if the improvements eventually only turn out to be relatively minor). If we don't hear from you we will assume that you don't really have an opinion.

The committee hopes that by the time the scheme is presented to the **AGM** everyone will have had their say, discussed options, and agree that the scheme, whatever it may be, is the most appropriate one for the hut. The meeting should then be able to simply approve the proposals formally.

Environmental projects, trees and things, is covered separately. See page 4.

There is still much interest in the proposal to charter a boat for a **trip to St Kilda** next year. See page 13. The important point is that we need to organise it very soon. These boats get booked well in advance. If you might be interested but haven't been in touch with the chairman yet, call him now. There could still be a space or two available but they might be gone soon. You don't have to commit yourself just yet and if you are on Rogers list you will be kept informed.

Last but not least, congratulations to **Phil Clark** on his success in the Cairngorms:

His solo traverse of 18 Munros, 70 miles with 21,000 feet of ascent, took him 22 hours 4 minutes, 36 minutes better than the previous record, set in 1990.

High House Nature Reserve

Peter Goff

A couple of years ago your Chairman decided to knock up 4 bird boxes and a couple of owl boxes. This proved to be inspired, and the clubs bird-watching fraternity reported these facts;

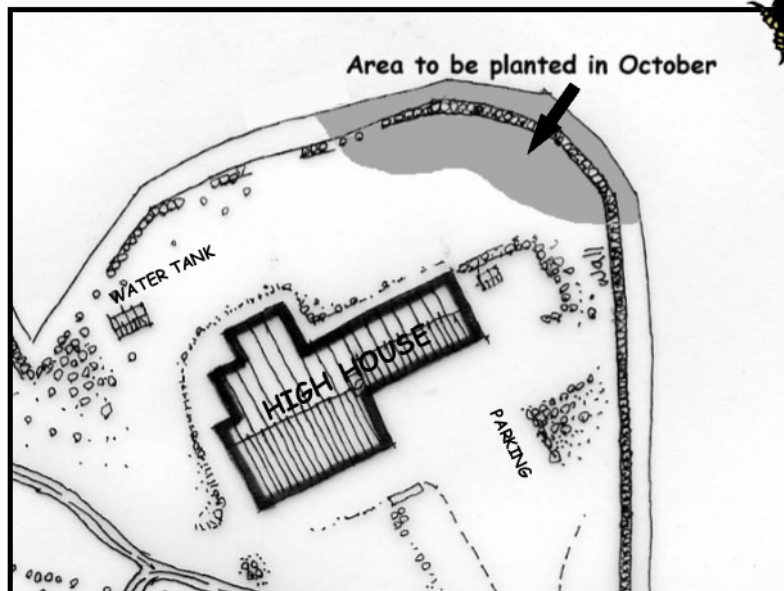
In the first year, going in a clockwise direction, the box on the sycamore next to the men's dorm was occupied by a flycatcher, the one on the Austrian Pine, or whatever it is, had nothing. The box on the twin-trunked sycamore a Great Tit and on the old Ash near the door, a Blue Tit. Not bad, three out of four, especially as the boxes had only been in place a very short time, and the flycatcher was special and unexpected.

This year all four boxes were occupied: the flycatcher was back, the Great Tit had changed sites to the Pine and a red-start was in the Great Tit's box. The Blue Tit was back in the ash. Excellent result, and with the bird table magically still in situ, early sightings of a pair of nuthatches. Also seen close by was a stoat and regular visits by weasels playing about in what's left of the wall.

(see page 5 opposite for results of the owl box installation.)

Now that the new boundary fence is up another fence is going to be put in place down the slope behind the men's dorm. A scattering of understorey trees are to be planted here to enhance the shelter belt and to attract the aforementioned birds etc. It would seem to make sense if only native species were planted. This would be more in keeping with the area and they should be able to stand up to the weather conditions better. There is going to be a planting day (See Social Calendar -30th October) and anyone who would like to support this project by providing a tree or helping to plant one, get in touch with a committee member. A short list of suitable understorey trees may be of help:

Hawthorn	Crataegus Monogyna
Hazel	Corylus Avellana
Holly	Ilex Aquifolium
Mountain Ash	Sorbus Aucuparia



If these are planted in the right place at the right time there is a good chance of success. The latin names are the unadulterated native species.

Now the sheep are out, or most of them anyway it is very noticeable how the vegetation is growing. We shall have to discuss a grazing plan with Pete Edmondson. Well either that or buy a lawn mower and strimmer.

New Residents at High House

Ruth Joyce, ably assisted by Rosie Southwell

The owls were the centre of attention when we (Terry, my children Rosie and Evelyn, and I) visited High House at the beginning of June. Remarkably they were un-phased by this attention, so that I got the distinct impression after a few days that it was they who were carefully observing us. Certainly they had more style - no crashing delicately through the undergrowth flashing binoculars and cameras for them.

On our arrival on Monday, we were greeted by the sight of Peter (Barnes) standing by the bench gazing intently at the boundary fence on the far side of the stream. Beckoning with his binoculars we were invited to join him. In hushed tones he explained that the object of his attentions was well actually I took it to be a very large beige candy floss atop of a fence-post. How it got up there was anybody's guess.

Anyway I was quickly assured by everyone who had already been staying over the weekend - (Stuart, Peter, Kryisia, Maya and her boys and friends, and Philip), that this thing, variously nicknamed by the children as Plop, Blob etc, was a baby owl. And that it had at least one parent and, reputedly, a sibling.

So actually we observed 2 blobs of candy floss, one more fully- fledged and owl-like than the other, over the next couple of days. We also got good sightings of at least one parent. Possibly two parents but we only ever saw one at a time. I had not realized how big baby owls were; the mounds of fluff seemed larger than adults. They somehow managed to

get up into trees, choosing the large sycamore with the owl nesting box on one side of the territory, and various small trees and fence posts on the opposite side, beyond the stream.

In the evenings the parents and babes kept tabs on each other in a call and response between these 2 vantage points. Being tawny owls, they didn't do the twit-whoop thing, but a soft screechy whistle. The timing was precise, and if the baby missed a beat, the parent would call again to prompt the reply. A bit like mobile phones for owl parents, I thought - "Come on, check in you little horror" - "OK mum - I'm still safe, don't sweat!"

Next time we go up I will illogically still expect those babies to be there. But they won't - though there will doubtless be an owly presence as the now grown ones cast about Borrowdale hunting in their own world, beyond the confines of High House. I guess they'll come back and visit, if only to check out whether those weird folk with the binoculars and cameras are still around.



Corsica

The Slide Show

April 2nd 2004

A jolly crowd of 16 Fellfarers met at the Sawyers Arms on April 2nd. Hugh rushed in with easel and ghetto blaster, and disappeared through a door followed by Alan And Margaret. The three of them were to show us slides of their holiday on Corsica.

After much leg-pulling to Hugh, he firstly gave us a run-down of the geography and place names of the island, with Krysia's usual prompting.

The slides were superb and I'm sure were appreciated by those that already had been and those that would like to. The rocky vistas and tracks were well portrayed and a breathtaking sunset made it a very enjoyable evening.

Thank you very much to all involved.

Olga N.

The first 'Climbing For All' Evening

22nd April 2004

Mr Goff's barometer was rising, so we knew it would be fine for our first evening of climbing of 2004.

The venue was, of course, Hutton Roof Crag. It's a tradition now. The editor and Mr Goff, being members of the 'Summer Wine Club', arrived long before the toiling classes had clocked off. They strolled up slowly, as befitted retired folk, in the bright sunshine. It was too early for orchids but spring colours were appearing through the grass and the bracken. The Cuckoo-Stone was still there, not tumbled down the hill yet. The editor learned on the way up that the path up to the crag is called 'Blasterfield Gap'. Does anyone know why?

They arrived.

It always looks so ridiculously small for climbing on, doesn't it? Ropes and rack were left in the rucksacks.

They clambered about on routes and in-between-routes, needing to keep moving because, although the sun shone brightly, that thin cool breeze slid insidiously up the Rakes as it always seems to do in the evening. The Cave Area did, however, provide a perfect windless bower for smoker and non-smoker alike.

Climbers appeared in twos and threes at regular intervals and the crag was soon buzzing with activity.

Some of the climbers were even older than fellfarers!

Cheryl and Jason arrived, surrounded by their friend, Steve, and a herd of children and dogs. Well, actually it was just three lads: George, Jake and Tom and one dog, Lottie. It seemed like a lot a' Lotties at times.

Anyway, the Smallwoods got down to the serious business of picnicking, throwing stuff for Lottie to retrieve, getting out the football.....then they thought about climbing.

By the time that Gary and Jack arrived there must have been about 30 people pottering about on the crag.

A top-rope allowed Jake and Tom to climb a route or two in fine style and for the grown-ups to tackle something a bit more demanding, while Mr Goff lead Jack on a couple of 'proper climbs', complete with belays and nut placements and everything! Jack was able to tick them off in his 'Duke of Edinburgh Award' booklet.

As the sun slipped down the western sky the little lads and Lottie disappeared into the (for them) shoulder-high bracken, lost in some unfathomable world of their own.

"Lucky kids" I thought. I looked around at all of us. Everyone smiling. "Lucky adults" I thought.

Mr Barnes made a late arrival, guessing correctly where we were, but refused to don his rockboots. Next week Pete?

It grew cooler and, by consensus, it was time to go, some home to bed and some, the really lucky ones, to the Kings Arms in Burton-in-Kendal.

The editor and Mr Goff calculated, on their way home, that the age range on the crag that evening was about 80 years!

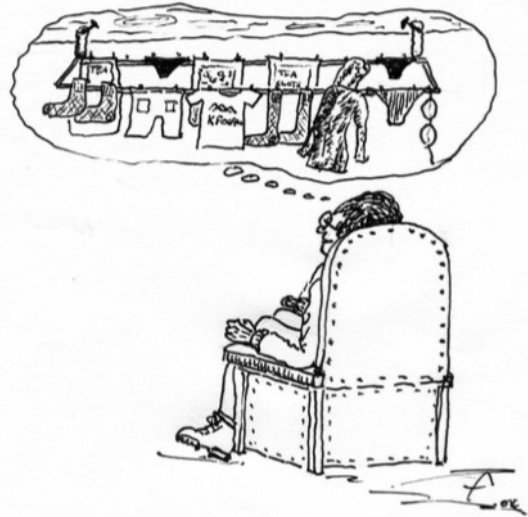
**I have not lost the magic of long days:
I live them, dream them still
Still am I master of the starry ways,
And freeman of the hill.
Shattered my glass, ere half the sands had run-
I hold the heights, I hold the heights I won.**

Geoffrey Winthrop Young.

The Limestone Link

Bill Hogarth

A damp morning saw six Fellfarers at Kendal bus station ready to tackle the twelve mile walk from Arnside to Kirkby Lonsdale. The first dilemma of the day happened when we all got on the bus -Peter Goff flashed his new bus pass at the driver and was expecting a half price fare but was refused outright sorry said the driver this pass is for Lancashire not Cumbria sorry, so poor old Peter had to pay full price unlike Sacky and Roger whose passes were for Cumbrians and went for half price. We arrived at Arnside and set off on our travels. We had only gone about 100 yards down the road when the hut booking secretary drove past wound down his window and welcomed us in to his domain. He said something like I hope you lot aren't coming round to my house for tea, We would have had to refuse any way, we were on a tight schedule we only had about six hours to complete the walk and what with Sacky's knee having its first run out since his operation it was in the lap of the gods when we would arrive in Kirkby Lonsdale. So we headed off on our path towards the Fairy Steps after a while we passed a party of young people heading in the same direction with large back packs probably on a Duke of Edinburgh award thing so we passed them left them to their adventure and carried on our way, not long after that we where sat on top of the Fairy Steps having our first break of the day looking at the view and chatting away, when the party of young people caught us up. The young girls in the party decided to cool down a bit by removing their sweaters leaving them only in sports type crop tops, so the view changed from the Kent estuary to sixteen year old girls with little crop tops on, so the bus pass people had to make a move as their pacemaker's could have started to over heat. So on we went with our walk. A little further on we walked through a wood and across a rather nice limestone pavement carefully following the sign posts, as it happened we didn't do it to well and got temporarily misplaced {LOST} and ended up walking about another mile or so to get us back on track. This was really testing Sacky's refurbished knee, and Peters hip was starting to groan. So when we arrived at Holme a pint was the order of the day. After a bit of a rest and a sandwich the summer wine gang decided to get a bit of an head start as the clock was ticking. Alec Krysia and myself finished our pints and followed on and eventually caught them up at Farleton Knott we had just one more hill to climb and then we would be free wheeling down to Kirkby Lonsdale so we plodded on over Hutton Roof and through the fields to Kirkby Lonsdale. Peters hip was just about holding out and Sacky was thinking of a radox bath as we entered the town centre, we had made it with fifteen minutes to spare. So we piled on to the bus and headed home for Kendal. We all had a good day's walk and enjoyed ourselves immensely and even somebody as young and fit as me could tell I had stretched my legs a bit.



The Old Drying Rack

Last night as I sat dreaming,
I dreamt a dream or three
About a wooden drying rack
Or where it used to be.

For 50 odd years it hung by the fire
A danger many have said
But for 50 odd years it's dried countless socks,
Whilst their owners lay sleeping in bed.

Then it moved 'cross the room
But it still dried the socks
Wet shirts, vests and pants and the rest,
And when you arose you put on warm clothes,
Free heat from a stove that's one of the best.

I awoke from the dream but it wasn't a dream
The old wooden drying rack's no more.
There's a new drying room in the old drying room
Up the stairs through the red painted door.

So the scene in the common room's all very neat,
No wet undies, socks or towels to be seen,
Except those on a string o'er the pot bellied stove
And the nails in the beam where it's been.

But I've heard, locked away
And saved from the saw,
Is the end off the old drying rack,
It's looked on with sadness
And one day, out of badness,
You'll wake up and find that it's back.

Fred Underhill

The National Parks of Venezuela A Tourist's Diary

Margaret & Roger Atkinson

Day 1

An early afternoon flight from Isla de Margarita to Puerto Ordaz, which is half way down the country. Great sunset over crap industrial landscape.

Day 2

Bus to San Francisco, there's more than one, this one's on the Orinoco River. Touristy trip round old Spanish fort, then onto small boat for trip on river to view wildlife and picnic under a Cottam tree

which has a bole that most be thirty feet across. we see Capuchino and White Faced Monkeys, Vultures, Hawks, Eagles, Osprey, Humming Birds, Various Kingfisher, Iguana up to five feet long and Dolphins, we also fished for Piranha, they are like teeth with tails.

Day 3

Early start heading South, shared breakfast with a

troop of monkeys besides a 200 metre wide waterfall, the surrounding park is planted with specimen trees from adjoining rainforest. Travel south from here, by bus, through endless rain forest visiting a workmg gold mine, hard and very basic working conditions, also stop in Las Claritas, a mining town with men in shops with scales to buy your gold, then sell you booze and women! We are also introduced to Tropical Rain Storms they make Seathwaite seem dry. After almost 500K the road climbs out of the forest onto a tree free plateau at 4000ft and our overnight stay at Sabana Camp.

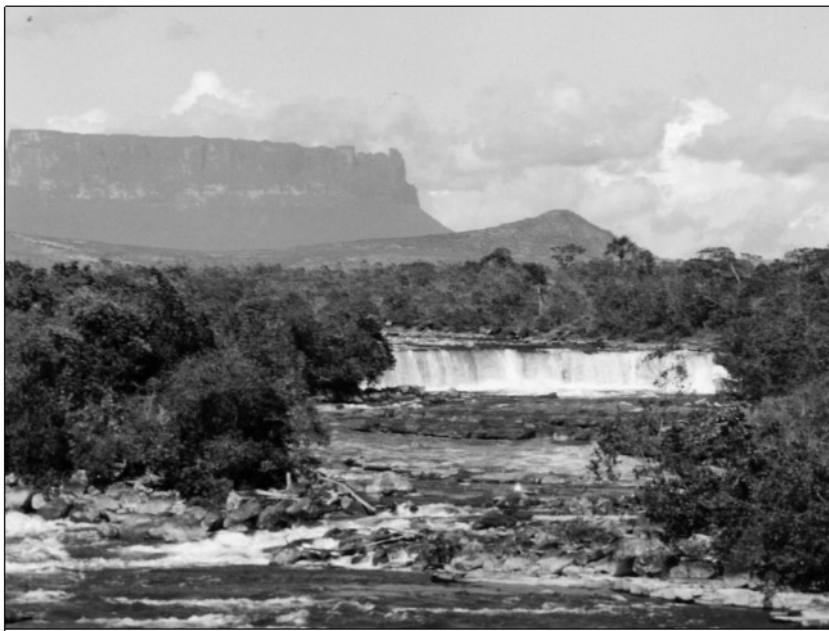
Day 4

Continue South heading into the region of Tepuis, 8000 ft high flat topped mountains, the setting for Conan Doyle's book The Lost World. Access to most of he Tepuis is very restricted due to the almost unique flora and flora on the isolated tops, a bit

like the Galapagos Islands. It is however possible to arrange a trip onto some hills, a Guide must be taken, you need to allow 7 days at least from the end of the four wheel drive track to the summit and back. Many stops today to view the landscape, the geology and waterfalls, which are ten a penny. Lunch is a picnic and a swim. then on to a view into the Valley of the Dinosaurs, with a Cubra Libre to help the imagination, finally arriving at Banana Camp in Santa Elena.

Day 5

By 4x4 today into the Paratepuy region, another area of forest, which leads up to the watershed between the Orinco and the Amazon basins, which



TEPUIS RORAIMA and SALTO YOURUANI

is also the border with Brazil. The Orinoco is 700k behind us at this point, it's a big catchment area! Visit an opencast gold and diamond mine, interesting, but what devastation to an otherwise pristine area, it makes you wonder on mans stewardship of the Earth. Sanity is restored by a guided walk in the forest, big hardwoods like Ma-

hogany and Myna birds and Green and Blue Parrots. End the trip with a quick visit to Brazil, just to say we've been there.

Day 6

Fly over Auyan Tepuis to get a view of Angel falls then on to Arekuna Camp, the Jungle Hilton, which overiooks the River Caroni, then a boat trip down the river to Baba rapids, Humming Birds in profusion. Back to camp for Dinner in a setting and a sunset to blow the mind.

Day 7

Easy day today, short flight to Canaima Camp then boat upstream to Canaima Lagoon and Waterfalls, spend time walking under waterfalls and swimming in Lagoon before returning to camp for flight to Isla de Margarita.

14-15th May 2004 Rhyd Ddu Meet, North Wales

The forecast was good, the Social Secretary said, so we set off early on Friday morning, the Soc-Sec. the Sec. and me.

We drove and drove and drove until we reached Blaenau Ffestiniog and then we drove a little bit more to the café by the reservoir.....

Peter was really keen to revisit, and share, Clogwyn yr Oen, "wonderful". So we did. Val and Peter climbed on it and the Editor spent the afternoon basking in the sunshine.

Everyone found their way to the excellent Oread house by the railway at Rhyd Ddu. There are rails again there and trains running!

It didn't seem to matter that we were paying London prices for the beer that evening. Perhaps we drank a little less to compensate for the high prices..... Er, no I don't think so.

Let me think, what happened on Saturday:

Kryisia and Alec walked that wonderful high and lonely Nantlle Ridge, Hughie and Mel achieved a long-standing target of doing the even more dramatic, but busier, Snowdon Horseshoe. Roger and Ian apparently wandered rather indiscriminately in the woods between Beddgelert and Rhyd Ddu. Val & Peter returned to the wonderful Clogwyn yr Owen and climbed more superb routes.

The editor wandered into a mine with an inadequate headtorch and frightened himself. Mind you, he's easily frightened.

It was a brilliant weekend. Hey, next time, why don't you come?



AN EVENING WITH THE BITTERNs Bird-watching at Leighton Moss 18th May 2004

About a dozen Fellfarers were gathered in front of the entrance building at the RSPB sanctuary on a glorious sunlit evening, wondering where Paul, our leader for the evening, was.

Meanwhile Paul gathered at the back of the entrance building with his telescope, wondering glumly why no-one else had turned up....

Eventually we gathered on the same side of the building, more members arrived and everybody was smiling. TWENTY TWO of us, all smiling in the sunshine. We agreed that it was an excellent turn-out.

A gentle stroll along the friendly pathways through the reserve to Lillian's Hide, to a Public Hide and then to Griesdale Hide gave us the opportunity to watch a whole bunch of birds:

Greylags and their numerous offspring, a whole herd of them, pattered about on the grass. We watched the cute little goslings. Aaaaaah! we said.

Those members who were there learned to distinguish between the song of a blackbird and that of a songthrush. At least, those who were listening did.

Reed and Willow Warblers sang to us (I think) as we ambled through the head-high reeds.

Paul hushed us and we heard, the first time for some, the deep bass notes of the bittern booming. It's a spine-tingling sound. One to cherish. There is only one male this year at Leighton so their future in this part of the world is on a knife-edge.

We watched shelducks and herons and great-crested grebes and coots and lapwings and black-headed gulls and poor doomed ruddy ducks and mute swans and canada geese and red deer (token mammal) going about their quiet unfathomable lives. It was tranquil and quite wonderful.

Excitement! A marsh harrier was spotted looking for something to dine on and everyone rushed to that end of the hide. We expected the building to up-end and disappear, like the Lusitania, into the watery waste.

Paul explained how fragile the existence of the reed-beds are and how they need to be managed constantly to ensure that the habitats are available for the species, oh so many of them, that need protection: Floating JCBs will be needed this autumn to make the reed-beds more welcoming for the bitterns if they are to thrive!

The light grew softer as evening slid towards night. The little fields between marsh and woodland in front of us glowed golden-green, pricked by the gleaming white dots of browsing sheep. The sun, invisible to us, sloped off to beddie-byes. The air began to cool.

It was time to go to the pub!

HEATHY LEA

Baslow, Derbyshire.
18-20. June 2004

Ian Underhill

Kryisia, Roger, Peter, Ian.

FRIDAY:

Going the scenic route via Macclesfield with the obligatory stop at the tearoom next to the Cat & Fiddle, we arrived at Heathy Lea at lunchtime.

Peter having no climbing partner, he came with us around Chatsworth Park to look at the trees. Chatsworth's 2,500 acres of woodland grows 10 tons of timber every day!

An avenue of limes have been planted to mark one of the Queen's recent celebrations. After spending a few minutes at the House we went over the hill to EDENSOR to look at the 11th. Duke of Devonshire's grave marked with a simple wooden cross; next stop the tea-room!

We then followed the Derwent to Beeley Lodge where we saw several massive oak trees in the Old Plantation reputed to be 750-1,000 years old. We then took the path by the lakes and Hunting Tower back to the cottage. It was 7.00 so we had to miss pre-dinner cocktails and the ROBIN HOOD.

SATURDAY:

From GRINDLEFORD station we walked past Podley Mill to PADLEY CHAPEL with it's dovecote on one end and the remains of a 14 century manor house. We then set off up PADLEY GORGE with it's many waterfalls surrounded by woodlands of OAK, SILVER BIRCH & SCOTS PINE following BURBAGE BECK. On leaving the wood we went along an ancient sunken track called HOLLOWGATE on to the Sheffield Road to climb MOTHER CAP and then over OWLER TOR with it's tortoise rock through WINYARDS NICK to climb HIGGER TOR where we sheltered from a sudden downpour underneath the leaning tower.

On the summit we passed by the 'Chockstone Window' before dropping down to the ancient CARL WARK, a huge stone rampart, then descending to the road and entering LONGSHAW PARK, originally part of the Duke of Rutland's estate, then by the Rhododendron walk to an old packhorse route to Grindleford station where we had a good brew despite all the polite warning notices saying 'DO NOT.....' and 'DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT.....'.

While we were having our drink we watched the trains going into TOTLEY TUNNEL, the second longest in BRITAIN.

We called in at the lovely village of EYAM which was devastated by the plague in 1665-1666 claiming 250 lives, leaving only a handful of survivors. The church has a sundial circ. 1775 and one of the best preserved Saxon crosses in the Peak. The vicar asked the people not to leave the village to avoid contaminating the whole area. Food was left at a boundary point with money being left in vinegar (used as a disinfectant). We walked a considerable distance to this site and Peter's constructive criticism was "What a load of crap". This village is well worth a visit.

SUNDAY:

It didn't look a good day; one of those "too bright, too soon" days so we did a few touristy bits, visiting TIDESWELL, which once flourished as a centre for wool and lead. The 14th. Century church of ST. JOHNS is well worth a visit with it's pews with doors on. During a break in the rain we had a tour of the village's buildings and fountains etc. Our next stop was to be at BUXTON but by the time we got there it was p***ing down so we went to the Cat & Fiddle for lunch and then back home after another excellent meet in Derbyshire.

What a poor turn-out - only 4.



Extract from a Fellfairy's Diary-8

Thursday 10th June 2004

Every road from the village leads downwards. We follow one of them, guided by the crude hand-drawn map, our only aid. We are looking for a path: it should be easy to find because this is the walk to do from here. We ask the way and create confusion among those we ask. We find it though, eventually, right behind us. A narrow path plunges steeply down into the forest. Our boots fail to grip on the mossy surface and we take it in turns to up-end ourselves. Only Julia, somehow, manages to stay upright. Gill, bruised and despairing, eventually says she will return to the village: the steepness and slipperiness are just too much for her boots. A wizened barefoot woman strolls downhill past us with a huge basket on her head and speaks. Pen translates: "You must take off your shoes" Remembering yesterdays encounters with leeches, Gill keeps on her socks. It gets rougher and her socks now have to contend with mud, rock steps, streams and stones. We are heading down into wilder country. The only sounds come from birds in the tree canopy, invisible bugs close to us and Pen chattering incessantly. The path divides frequently, without giving a clue as to which one we should follow. We decide each time on instinct alone. We can see, through the trees, the apparently identical forested flank of the opposite hillside but as time drags on we seem to be making no progress down to the invisible river far below us. Sometimes we pass little clearings, tiny terraced paddy fields, straw thatched huts, a pig or two, smiling peasants scratching a living from this steep jungle.

I see a piercing golden light, a tiny spot, on a bush some way off. I creep forward slowly and beckon the others to come and look. It is the weirdest bug any of us has ever seen: a perfect little dome of brilliant burnished gold in the centre becoming transparent at the edges. Through this transparency we can see it's little legs working as it circles on the leaf. I slowly take out my camera and select a setting for a close-up, whereupon the creature takes to the air, leaving us talking of alien lifeforms

After hours of stumbling downwards we glimpse the narrow bridge below us and then burst out, hot and tired, into the sunshine on the banks of the river. The water tumbles over and around huge boulders. We gather on a shingly beach and cool our feet in the icy flow. Delightful! I leave mine in until they are numb with cold and then leave them in a bit longer. A little voice halloos to us out of the trees on the far bank and eventually I spot a tiny brown face grinning from high amongst the leaves. I wave and a little scrap of a lad hurries down onto the bridge, followed by three, even smaller, girls. They stand in their dirty ragged clothes and stare down at these pale paddling strangers. I wave again and they scurry down to the shingle to stare solemnly at us. We smile and are rewarded by the sight of their four beaming smiles. The boy throws stones into the water while the girls just stare. We feed them biscuits. More smiles.

We cannot linger. We have taken too long to complete the 'easy' half of our journey. It's all uphill now and the day is getting hotter. We wave goodbye to our new friends and scramble up steep ground to find a dirt road running parallel to the river. The sketch map suggests we might follow it for a while. The heat is intense. I'm seriously worried that our water will not last. The river is far below now and there is no sign of any running water in the vegetation above or below the road.

We are climbing uphill now, still on a jeep-track. A little hut appears and I see clearly the words on a sign: 'bed & breakfast'. "We'll be able to get water here." I tell Dame. He stares at the sign. "Where does it say bed & breakfast?" he asks. I look again. The words have disappeared. I'm hallucinating! A kind man at the hut does provide us with water, however. Half a mile further on we come across a roadside shack selling pepsil! We sit in the dirt as children gather around us. I drink my first cola for maybe thirty years. Delicious!

The map shows a footpath making a direct line up the hill, cutting out the zig-zags of the road. When we find it, Pen, Dame and I opt for this direct route but Gill and Julia, showing some signs of weariness, decide to stay with the gentler gradient. Wise choice. Twenty minutes later we three are back at the same bit of road, behind a couple of barefoot lads who guided us back through the trees to safety. We stride out to try to catch the two girls, now far in front of us.

We arrive, all exhausted, at the Trecker's Hostel, check that they have room for us, and walk to the Holy Lake that is our destination. The forest around is loud with the clicking of insects and strange barking of frogs. Trees are festooned with prayer flags, many of them aged to grey tatters and the long jetty is lined on both sides by bright prayer-wheels. The water is still, the only element of the scene with any measure of tranquillity. A holy man joins us on the jetty and performs a pooja for each of us, and marking our foreheads with tikas. We stroll back to the Hostel for tea on the balcony, our feet steaming gently in our socks.

Later, we find a place to eat, dark wooden floor, walls and ceiling. It's a larger version of my grandad's garden shed. We peer through a hatch to see the food cooking on a wood fire in an oven fashioned out of mud. We dine in style on a spicy vegetable dish, eaten with fingers but washed down with local beer. Delectable! Rain rattles on the roof as we sit in the gloom and eat.

We feel our way back through the darkness under a sky lit by silent explosions of distant lightning. I lie awake all night on my grubby bed, listening to the loud rustling sounds within my room, unwilling to turn on the light, not wanting to imagine what I might see....

At 4.15 I hear others stirring and I put on my light so that they will see, through the wide cracks in the door, that I'm awake. I see now that the rustling has come from a carrier bag, a patch on the broken window, moving in the breeze. We gather in the darkness outside, gazing in awe at the snowy peaks catching the first hint of pre-dawn light far above us, our first sighting of the big hills. We walk quickly in the chill air to the lake again. A pack of village dogs joins us, snapping and nipping. I will use my boot if I have to. An eerie mist lies on the grey water as the light grows and little plumes of cloud rise from the tree-covered slopes around the lake. Now I feel the serenity. The temple at the entrance gateway is open when we return and we see that it is *completely* filled by a *monster* prayer-wheel. We pull on the towing bar and soon have the wheel rumbling round, sending it's repeated prayers out to the gods.

A hurried breakfast back at the hostel, spicy and washed down with pepper tea, is only just finished in time for us to flag down the passing jeep that is our only alternative to walking back the way we came. It is already full but somehow we manage to squeeze in another five bodies! Some disappear onto the roof. I only manage to secure one buttock inside the jeep and I spend the next hour anxiously keeping my left foot off the tyre spinning an inch from my toe and gazing down the thousand-foot precipice below us as we bounce down the track. The blood returns to my white knuckles later as we tuck into a second breakfast. We are back at our hotel with the rest of the family. I'm exhausted and go to bed to snooze for a while. The windows are wide open. Excited voices from the balcony outside my door make me open my eyes. The cloud has cleared for the first time and there, without even lifting my head from the pillow, I can see, just before I drift into sleep, the third highest mountain in the world, Kangchenjunga

(two of)
**The
 Islands
 of
 Derwentwater**

Herbert of Derwent Water.

The St Herbert's island of Derwent Water is well known for its beauty, but is perhaps little known for the legend that is attached to it. This pretty little paradise of four or five acres is well covered with woods and situated near the centre of the lake.

It obtained its name from St Herbert, a priest who chose the island as a sanctuary for his devotions. The remains of the hermitage are still visible, and near the hallowed ruins stands a small a grotto of unhewn stone, called the New Hermitage, which was erected by Sir Wilfred Lawson in the closing years of the last century. St Herbert lived on a simple diet, mostly home grown vegetables and fish caught from the lake. This was about the middle of the seventh century and he was very friendly with St Cuthbert, the Bishop of Lindisfarne. They conversed a great deal, and so close a connection sprung up between them, that both these holy men expired on the same day, and in the same hour and minute, which according to Bede, was in the year 678 or 687.

There is little information recorded of St Herbert, and but for his friendship with St Cuthbert this name would not have been handed to posterity at all. He lived, prayed and meditated on this island.

In the register of Bishop Appleby, in 1374, there is an indulgence of forty days to any inhabitant of Crosswithaite who should attend the vicar to St Herbert's Isle on the 13th April yearly (that being the anniversary of his death) there to celebrate the memory of St Herbert.

Wordsworth wrote the following lines:

*Of the Hermit of Derwent Water.
 If thou, in the dear love of some one friend,
 Hast been so happy that thou know'st, what the thoughts
 Will sometimes, in the happiness of love,
 Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
 This quiet spot: and, stranger, not unmoved,
 Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
 The desolate ruins of St Herbert's cell.
 There stood his threshold: there was spread the roof
 That sheltered him, a self-secluded man,
 after long exercise in social cares,
 And offices humane, intent to adore
 The deity, with undistracted mind,
 And meditate on everlasting things
 In utter solitude.*



Lord's Island and the Legend of Lady's Leap.

One of the ancient Lords of Derwentwater, who lived in a castle on Lord's Island, had an evil reputation for robbing and pilfering the neighboring counties, and made the castle a store house for the large amount of booty he obtained.

His sister who lived with him was a god fearing woman, despised her brother for his evil way of living, and shuddered when he related his latest adventures and displayed to her the results of his plundering.

So displeased was the Lady that one day while the Lord Derwentwater and his men were pillaging near Kendal, she set fire to the section of the castle where all the treasures were deposited.

On returning, Lord Derwentwater discovered the cause of the fire, and the Lady, fearing his terrible vengeance, crossed over that part of the lake opposite the island, which in those days was fordable.

In her desperation, and with determined effort, she climbed up the immense precipice and finally got to the summit up, by a track which still retains the name "Lady's Rake" or "Lady's leap".

The legend says that she made her way to London and lived in safety with relatives and friends.

Another version of the Legend of Lady's Rake, however, describes the flight of the last Earl of Derwentwater, taking with her all the families jewels to purchase the freedom of the Earl - with out success.

He was executed for treason and for his part in the rebellion of 1715. Some nights after the execution there was a great display of Aurora Borealis, and the people from the district afterwards called it "Lord Derwentwater's Lights."

St Kilda

ONCE IN A LIFETIME

Enthusiasm for the proposed St. Kilda trip (in May or June 2005) is gathering pace:

There are currently expressions of interest from 11 members. Because of the long lead-in time for a trip like this, we need to book very soon. We will almost certainly be chartering a boat. Which means that there might not be many more spaces available. But if you are at all interested, or want to know more, call Roger now. Not tomorrow, not after the next pint, not after lunch, not when Corrie finishes. Now!

Ian Underhill, a St. Kilda enthusiast, has taken the trouble to give you a potted history to whet your appetite:

THE TRAGEDY OF ST. KILDA

The first owners of St. Kilda were the McLeods of Dunvegan, who won it in a 50 mile boat race against the McDonalds. Nearing HIRTA, the McLeods could see they were not going to win, so one of the rowers cut his hand off and threw it on the island, thus being the first to land.

The ST. KILDA archipelago consisting of BORERAY, SOAY, DUN & HIRTA (known as St. Kilda), is 50 miles west of HARRIS and 110 miles from the nearest land of the mainland. Most people lived around VILLAGE BAY, on HIRTA, which is the landing place. Today there is a military post here and the National Trust are restoring some of the houses and CLIETS (roughly built huts), made of stone with turf roofs which allowed air to circulate to dry peat, corn, and to preserve food, also ropes to stop mildew forming. Ropes were one of the most valuable possessions of the islanders.

The geology of the islands is made up of granite and gabbro. On climbing the slopes of CONACHIR, 1397 ft. , you realise that the rolling hills have no back to them., only cliffs; at 1000 ft they are among the highest in Britain.

Seabirds abound on the islands, of which the GANNET, PUFFIN and FULMAR were the staple diet of the people. The Fulmar also gave them oil for their lamps. One rarity to be found is the ST. KILDEN WREN, larger than ours. Another rare breed is the SOAY SHEEP. No cross-breeding with Blackface or Cheviot was allowed (to keep the breed pure but would not improve the strain). The same thing happened with cereal crops: they were using the for over 50 years: so crops started to dwindle.

The community was controlled by a 'PARLIAMENT'. It was the men of the village who met each day to discuss what work they were going to do (if any) or settle disputes. While this as going on the women were doing the work: a woman's job was to do all the carrying; even bags of meal & flour from the boats; the men would lift the bags onto the woman's back and off they would go.

One of the main jobs of the men involved rock-climbing to catch the sea-birds from the cliff; barefooted they scaled the cliffs using ropes made out of plaited heather. Women's work was to collect CROTAL, a lichen found on the rocks, boiling it, and producing a reddish-brown dye used in the making of HARRIS TWEED.

After years of living in seclusion their society was disturbed by the visits of of Victorian tourists who brought with them food and promises of aid when they got back from the mainland. They also brought illness- common colds and diseases from which they had no immunity. Teachers were sent from the mainland to teach the islanders to speak English so that they could communicate with the visitors, who then told them about life on the mainland, thus causing discontent about their way of life.

In the 1880s the young people started to leave; later 42 St Kildans emigrated to Australia. During the 3 month journey most were struck down with scarlet fever and measles from which they died, never seeing their new homes.

On the island people began to rely on charity, and money from the tourists. They lost interest in growing their own food and bought in goods: was this the beginning of the end of their existence on HIRTA ?

Trade was good with the mainland: selling Harris tweed, fulmar oil, feathers and dried sea birds. This economy collapsed when demand for these products declined.

In 1930 things came to a head when they asked to be evacuated to Edinburgh or Glasgow. Most were sent to MORVERN to work for the Forestry Commission but they drifted away to the cities.

The older people could not overcome the sudden and drastic change and soon died. Some of the others were that homesick that they would go back to HIRTA in the summer and live in their old houses.

Who is to blame for the downfall of their society; the Do-gooders? Or would their 'Island on the Edge of the World' have collapsed without outside influences?

" SO LONG AS IT REMAINS OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD AN IDEAL SOCIETY CAN BE A VIABLE SOCIETY"

Aldous Huxley

THE GREAT LANGDALE STONE AXE FACTORY

I confess: I pinched this from an old Fell & Rock Journal, 1952.....Ed. The author was R.G. Plint

The discovery of a stone axe factory of the late Neolithic Period (about 1900 B. C.) in Great Langdale was an event of some importance in the archaeological world.

The rock used is a volcanic tuff or ash hardened and baked to the consistency of flint. It is dark green in colour, very finely grained and weathers to a light grey. When struck it chips in a similar manner to flint and thus is capable of being worked. The rock occurs on Bowfell, Mart Moor Crag and again on Pike of Stickle where it can be distinguished as a broad band of light grey rock just below the 'thimble' and in distinct contrast to the darker colour of the nearby crags. It also extends as a low out-crop along the whole of the south-east face of Harrison Stickle.

How it came to be discovered by the Stone Age Man is not known; but there can be no doubt that through the many thousands of years covered by that period he became acquainted with the types of rock best suited for his purpose. In the south of England he used flint and even mined for it in the chalk, while in the mountains he probably went to the natural quarry of the scree and by trial and error found out which was the most suitable rock—usually of volcanic origin. The discovery of the Great Langdale factory by Mr Brian Bunch, of Ulverston, is most interesting. It had been known for a long time that axes had been made from stone of Lake-

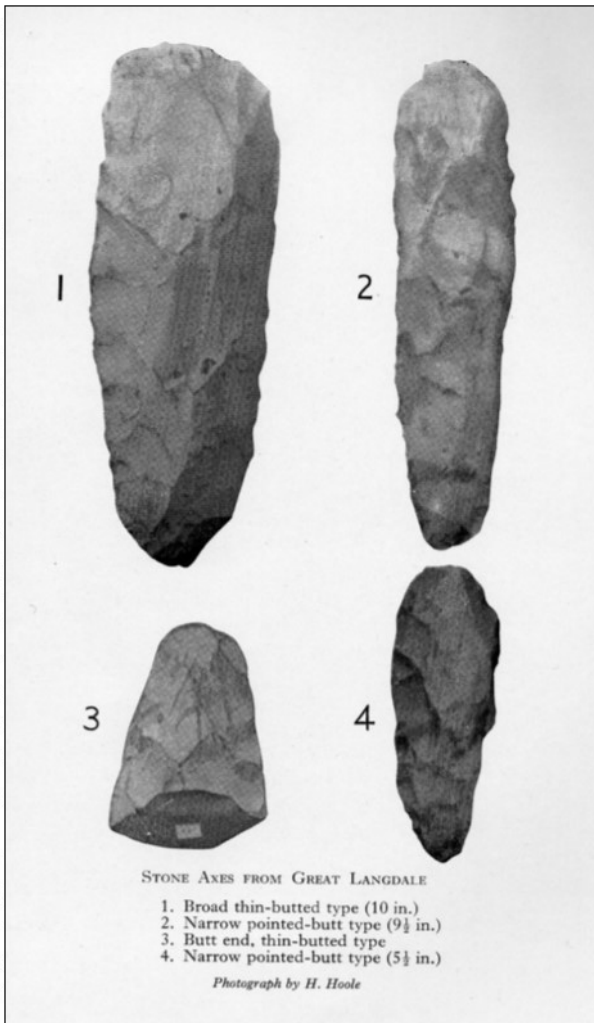
land origin which, it was thought, was carried down as boulders into Lancashire, Cheshire and the Midlands by the glaciers during the Ice Ages; and the significance of the discovery many years ago of a small chipping site near the top of Stake Pass by Professor D. M. S. Watson had not been fully appreciated.

A petrological study of stone axes found in their area was made by the South Western Group of Museums and Art Galleries and the axes examined were grouped according to the type of rock from which they were made. Those of Lakeland origin came under Groups VI, VIII or XI and by far the greatest number were Group VI: only odd specimens of the other two groups having as yet

been found. One result of the examination revealed that there were far too many axes made from Lakeland rock (Group VI) for glacial drift to have been the sole source of supply and it was, therefore, assumed that there must be a main source elsewhere.

It should be noted that such factories had already been found in Wales and Ireland. Mr Bunch and his wife in 1947 spent a holiday in Langdale where it was known the

rock occurred and during that time examined the various scree slopes to see if there was, by any chance, evidence of such a factory. Their efforts were finally rewarded by the finding of flakes and axes in the screes descending from the gully on the east side of Pike of Stickle. Further examination in the area showed that the workings were extensive. More flakes and axes were found in the screes to the west of the main fall and in addition several small sites were found on the fells above. Later still it has been found that the work had gone on over the whole of the out-crop on the southern face of the Pike and much of the scree below had come from these upper workings. At Easter this year it was noticed that the scree at the southern corner of Harrison Stickle was light coloured and, on examination, proved to be the result of another extensive working. Further visits have shown that there are sites along the whole of the south-eastern side of that peak.



So far only axes have been found and these vary in shape: some are broad with a thin butt and others are slightly thicker in section but have a pointed butt. In length they can be anything between 6-10 inches, depending on the initial size of the piece of rock selected for the work and how much it was necessary to chip away. The axes are thought to have been fashioned by striking the piece of rock chosen against a block of stone which acted as an anvil. Many such blocks may be found in situ with chippings surrounding them. It is also possible that portable anvils of granite were used. One of about 10 lb. weight was found on the main scree shoot. It is about 9 inches in diameter and 4 inches thick, flat on the

under- side and dome shaped on the top as the result of countless blows. A number of pieces of granite have been found on the sites and as they all show some part of a curved surface similar to this specimen it would appear that they are parts of broken anvils. Granite is not found in Langdale and as the glacial flow was outwards, the boulders could not have been carried there by that means and must, therefore, have been brought in by hand. Hammer stones were also used ; probably for the finer work, and one found has been identified as a piece of granite from Criffel or Dalbeattie.

From specimens found of the thin pointed butt type it would appear that it was the practice to shape the thin end first as this would be the end most likely to break in the course of manufacture ; but in the case of another specimen of the broad thin butted type the two ends have been chipped out and the centre left untouched. All the axes found, with perhaps the exception of a few that have been overlooked, are discards, having either been broken across in the shaping or because in chipping, a flake has plunged too deep and so spoil the symmetry of the implement or because some part of the rock has proved intractable. Even so I do not think anyone who has handled them can fail to appreciate the skill with which they have been made. Some of the discards are in a very advanced state of manufacture and it is not difficult to imagine the feelings of the craftsman when his work was marred through no fault of his own.

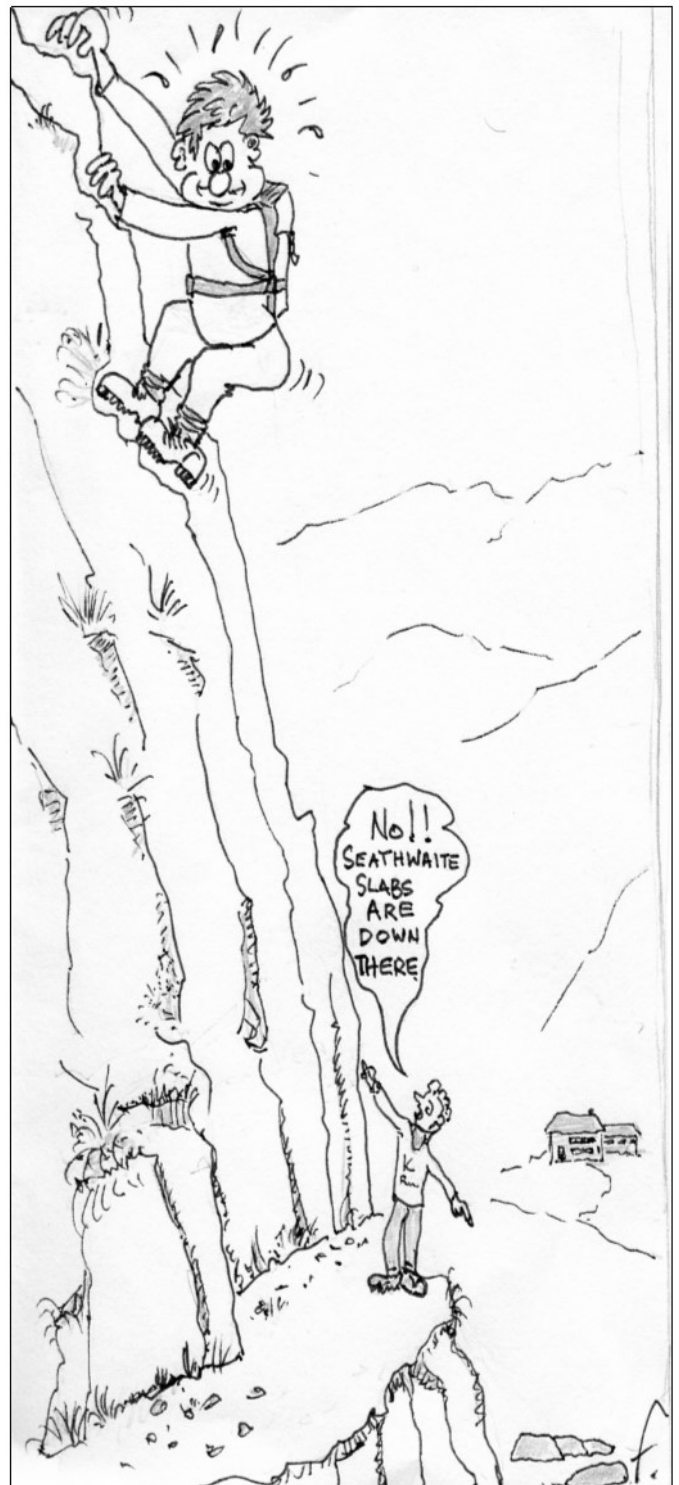
The final process in the manufacture was that of polishing. This would be done by rubbing the implement down with sandstone and water. At Ehenside Tarn site, near Beckermet on the Cumberland Coast where sandstone is abundant, both rough and polished axes have been found. It is assumed that the work on the Pikes would be done during the summer months of the year and that the roughed-out axes would be taken by way of the high level routes to the permanent settlements, which were most likely on the Cumberland Coast, for finishing during the winter. On completion they would be traded for other goods and so have travelled far and wide over the British Isles. A polished specimen in the museum at Dumfries is said to have been found in Poland.

Some interesting points have come to light in the course of the examination of the factory sites. A section of peat from the Mart Moor site has been subjected to microscopical examination and it is estimated that the lowest layer is only 2,000 years old. From this it would therefore appear that when the factory was in full production the upper fells were just bare rock. On the other hand it may be that the chipping sites on the fell top were selected because they were dry and well drained. Both Mart Moor and Watson's sites fulfil these conditions and even now are more or less free from peat.

Again it is often said that the screes are always on the move but the finding of axes and chippings lying around anvil stones on the screes seems to show that the movement for a very long time has been slight and that the

screes are very much the same now as they were 4,000 years ago. It appears probable that climbers and walkers in the past 50 years have imparted more movement to them than natural causes in several thousand years.

Fuller information can be found in an article by Miss Clare Fell in Volume L of the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, and also in a paper by Mr Brian Bunch and Miss Clare Fell in the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society, Vol. XV (1949).



FROM THE ARCHIVES

You will remember the obituary of Jammy Cross in the last newsletter. I make no apology for including a rather fuller piece about the remarkable lady. It is taken from the June issue of High magazine

Alice 'Jammy' Cross (1911-2004)

In the late 1990s, with all the technical paraphernalia of the modern mountaineer, I found myself facing a defining moment during a particularly taxing and serious climb. A bulge of verglassed rock prodded me accusingly in the chest while my ice-axes were planted awkwardly on thin ice smears coating sloping rock, with only a tooth and a half of each pick biting. I had to commit. I had to hang out over the frightening drop and trust. But trust what? My rope hung heavy and runnerless for 100ft. There was nothing to stop a slip, which meant a fall of well over 200ft and no security beyond holding your nerve and keeping your balance. I was, quite frankly, petrified. When I finally and thankfully reached a sanctuary belay I marveled at the courage and skill of the pioneers of this route. Among them had been a young woman who had coolly led up the route with vastly less sophisticated equipment than mine, 60 years previously. Her name was Alice 'Jammy' Nelson.

Nelson hailed from a working-class family in Kendal and was introduced to the mountains via the Girl Guides. Unlike most of her peers she was not, however, prepared to restrict her activities merely to rambles and reef knots. When she began scaling cliffs her parents were horrified and tried to discourage her. This proved difficult in someone as

independently minded as Alice. (As a schoolgirl she acquired the nickname 'Jammy' a corruption of the French 'jamais' thanks to a reputation as willful pupil who could occasionally be stubborn.) Nevertheless, her family strictly forbade Nelson to rock-climb until she reached the age of majority. Once she turned 21, however, there was no stopping her.

Nelson had begun a job as a clerical worker at Kendal's 'K' Shoes factory and it was there she met Sid Cross, one of K's cobblers and an enthusiastic young climber. From the mid-1930s until the Second World War, Cross and Nelson turned themselves into a skilled and formidable climbing partnership. It was a highly unusual combination in more ways than one. For a start the pair were both working-class climbers in a prewar mountaineering milieu dominated by male, middle-class professionals. But even more remarkable was the existence of a woman climber who took both a co-equal role in leading hard, technically demanding climbs and in pioneering new ones. Back in the pre-war era this was almost unheard of. And unlike many Lakeland-based climbers of this time, who tended to restrict themselves to particular mountain ranges or valleys, Nelson and Cross ranged widely over the district, cycling to Langdale and then hiking over mountain passes to camp. The duo climbed most of the classic winter gully lines in the mountains over the next few winters and then began breaking out to create new, hard climbs of their own.

One of the most impressive of these occurred during the winter of 1937/38 when they climbed Langdale's *Bowfell Buttress* in full win-

ter conditions. This climb, described in the current climbers' guidebook as, 'a technical mixed climb, probably the best of its grade south of the border' and justifiably graded these days as V/VI, is characterized by tricky crack climbing and delicate moves on sloping, thinly iced rock. Sid Cross remembered tackling the crux pitch using Jammy's long-handled ice-axe as a foothold while torquing his own axe higher up in a crack. Later on in the climb he displayed even more prescient technical skills when he used a Scout knife, which he carried on climbs for splicing hemp rope, as an ice-dagger. It is obvious from the repertoire of improvised techniques that Cross and Nelson must have found the climb taxing. Despite this, Sid later recalled that for him and Jammy the most memorable moment was, 'Topping out under the most perfect winter evening with a pure duck egg blue sky'. The fun and beauty of climbing was the impetus behind these ascents, rather than the competitive drive which was galvanizing Alpine climbing on the Continent at this time.

Nevertheless, the winter ascent of *Bowfell Buttress* is especially significant in two ways. It was a futuristic route which pushed the technical difficulty of British winter climbing to extreme levels. Secondly, the coequal role of a woman is remarkable on a route of this difficulty during the late 1930s; it seems likely that with the ascents like *Bowfell Buttress*, Alice Nelson became the first woman in the world to climb Grade V and higher. Given that she was just as adept on pure rock (she became the first woman to lead Scafell's *Central Buttress* in 1939 then HVS 5b and re-

garded as one of the hardest rock-climbs in the country), Nelson might arguably be described as the best all-round British female mountaineer of the inter-war years.

The winter of 1937/8 was an especially busy one for the energetic Cross/Nelson partnership. Along with their good friends Albert and Ruth Hargreaves, and Astley Cooper, they completed the direct finish to *Central Cully*, on Gable Crag (Grade IV). This involved delicate step-cutting up frozen moss on a steep wall and with tenuous moves to reach the top. Albert Hargreaves was due to address the Pinnacle Club's annual dinner in the Sun Hotel at Conistone that evening and Jammy remembered him practicing his speech all the way up the climb — a fact which says much for the nonchalance and confidence with which the group approached technically difficult and serious first ascents. With the relatively unsophisticated equipment of the time, one mistake could have imperiled the entire party, such was the paucity of good anchor points. Running belays could be regarded as exotic luxuries. Climbs were undertaken wearing nailed boots with every hold chipped from the ice and snow. Even more remarkable, viewed from the perspective of today's cosseted car-bound society, is the fact that Cross and Nelson cycled to most of their epic adventures.

This was emphasized by another of their major achievements; the second ascent of Steep *GUI*, on Scafell (Grade V) in the winter of 1938/9 — the climb I later found so serious and frightening. (Norman Collie and party had actually climbed the route in 1891, but this remained unrecognized back in

the late '30s and the second ascensionists were effectively treading new ground.) Steep *Gill* is today regarded as the most difficult and serious of the traditional Lakeland gully climbs, with sparse protection on the crux section and unthinkable consequences in the event of a fall. Nevertheless Jammy recalled the climb as "fun" and, in fact, had more to say about the tricky descent, which included an iced-up *Broad Stand*. Jammy actually jumped down the steep section, such was her confidence. The reason for the hurry was the need to get down to Langdale before the daylight disappeared completely, in order to be able to cycle back to Kendal that evening to be ready for work

the next morning. Walking 12 miles, ascending 3,000ft, completing a Grade V climb and cycling 20 miles would be a considerable test for any modern triathlete. Doing it for 'fun' and still being at work at K Shoes the next day suggests astonishing levels of fitness and enthusiasm.

Neither could the performance of the Lakeland climbers be said to result merely from familiarity with their native fells. On a visit to Ben Nevis in 1937 Cross and Nelson not only completed the pre-war test-piece *Tower Ridge* after overtaking a party of well-known Scottish climbers (who later retreated in the face of the difficulties), but also climbed the crux *Great Tower* pitch di-

rect, the first time this was done in winter. A measure of the difficulty of the conditions was that, after overcoming a cornice in the dark, Nelson suffered frostbite to her toes. (Their legacy in Scotland also included the rock-climb *Shackle Route Severe*, in Glen Coe, a route named ironically after the elderly Lakeland climber George Bower had sternly advised Sid not to climb with a woman, since he considered them 'shackles'.) Undeterred, Sid officially 'shackled' himself to Jammy in 1939.

The war, and the later arrival of children curtailed the Crosses' climbing activities as they strove to make a living. Entering into partnership

with Albert and Ruth Hargreaves, they first co-managed a hotel in Boot, Eskdale, winning an entry in the very first Egon Ronay *Good Food Guide*. In 1949 the two couples acquired Langdale's famous Old Dungeon Ghyll hotel. They created the famous climber's bar which became one of the key focal points for post-war climbing developments in Lakeland. It was also during this period that Sid and Jammy became instrumental in setting up what was to become the Langdale Mountain Rescue team and pioneering the use of search dogs. Sid predeceased Jammy by six years.

Colin Wells



**This photo has been in the archives for some years
Who are they? Are they Fellfarers?
Surely not; they look far too sensible. Where is the building?
Any information please to the Editor.**

Social Calendar.2004

July

14th July 2004

An Evenings Exploration,
lasting about 3 hours, of the
Environs of Beetham



Starting at 6 pm
At the

Heron Cornmill car park
GR 498800

And finishing at the
Wheatsheaf Inn, Beetham

For more details, and if in doubt on the day,
ring Peter Goff

The committee meets on Tuesday 13th July at the Rifleman's Arms. We'll be discussing the coming party at High House and the proposed St. Kilda trip. Come and join us for a pint!

HIGH HOUSE



Is booked for Fellfarers

9th. July - 8th. August

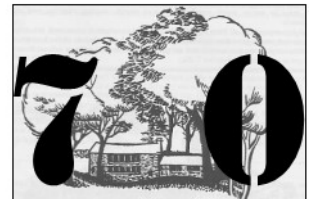
During this period the 'Summer
Wine Club' hopes to carry out
some major engineering works
(Dam Building and Highway
Improvements).

The date will be decided at short
notice, depending on the weather.

See page 3 for more details.

If you want to join us, call the
chairman to register your interest.

24th July 2004



Happy Birthday
High House!

To celebrate 70 years of Fellfaring
A buffet lunch at the hut
2-4 pm,
for all current & past members,
friends and local people.

Bring along friends old and new.
Bring along photos and memorabilia
that may be of interest to others.

Let's have a good old wallow
in nostalgia! It's what we do best!

August

The committee meets on Tuesday 10th August at the Rifleman's Arms. We'll be discussing the coming working weekend and the Social Programme. Come and join us for a pint.

HIGH HOUSE



Is booked for
Fellfarers
Fell-Race Weekend
7th August



Marshals needed.
Contact Peter Goff

Tuesday 17th August

WALTERS
2ND. ANCIENT
WOODLAND
WALK



Fred Toadhill

Another one-off opportunity
to explore some more private
woodland led by
Tony Walshaw.

Witherslack Church

G.R. 431842

6pm

Cairngorm Meet

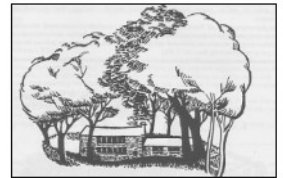
27-29 August 2004

Milehouse
(OS sheet 35,
839043)

Kincaig, Strathspey

Plenty of bedspaces
Call Peter Goff to book.

HIGH HOUSE



Is booked for Fellfarers
and
Kendal Caving Club
27-29 August 2004

If you can't be bothered to
drive all that way to the
Cairngorms, why not tootle
up to t'hut?
Why not indeed?
Hmmm?

September

The committee meets on Tuesday 14th September at the Rifleman's Arms. We'll be discussing the working weekend and improvements at High House. Come and join us for a pint.

Walk-Meal
4th September 2004

THE WOODLANDS WEST OF WINDERMERE



X35 Service Bus leaves
Kendal Bus Station 9.25 am

Walk from Newby Bridge via Finsthwaite, High Dam, Rusland, Thwaite Head, Sawrey, the tarns of Claife Heights, High Wray, Clappersgate, Ambleside for a meal and a well deserved pint.

About 13 miles

Return buses from Ambleside
7.25 pm, 8.49 pm, 11.18 pm.

Mendip Meet

10-11 September 2004

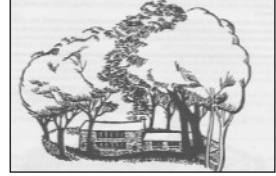
Mendip Nature Resource Centre
Wells Hill Bottom
Green Ore
Wells

OS sheet: 183 NGR: ST 589494



Attractions in the Area:
Cheddar Gorge, Wookey Hole,
Ebbor Gorge, Wells Cathedral,
Glastonbury Tor & Abbey,
Somerset Levels.
Book your place with Peter Goff

HIGH HOUSE



**Is booked for Fellfarers
17-18 September 2004**

Mainly because it's another
WORKING WEEKEND
and it's about time you dragged your
lazy butt up there and did some work.

**There's some brilliant jobs to do
this time.**

You'll have to turn up to find out
what they are, of course.

Bring all your tools.

Just in case.

**Good wholesome food provided for
those who deserve it.**

October

The committee meets on Tuesday 12th October at the Rifleman's Arms. Come and join us for a pint.

HIGH HOUSE



**Is booked for Fellfarers
8th-9th October 2004**

The committee, composed as it is of aged and unimaginative individuals incapable of remembering whose round is next, never mind what was decided at the last meeting, is completely and utterly bereft of ideas for your amusement when you turn up for this meet with your expensive thermal underwear and your neatly pressed trews and your box of chilled cabernet sauvignon and your laminated maps hanging round your necks.....oh, sorry, wrong club!

Have a brilliant weekend!

Slide Show



A Presentation Of
Some Of Our
Members'
International
Experiences Of 2004

Details To Be
Finalised.

See The Next Issue Of The
Fellfarer (October)

HIGH HOUSE



**Is booked for Fellfarers
29-30th October 2004**

DIRTY (FINGERNAILS) WEEKEND

**Bring along a tree or a shrub
to plant in our new Wind-
break/Conservation Area**

Native plants only-see page 4 for
preferred species-if in doubt, call
Peter Goff for his approval!

CLUB OFFICIALS

1

President: **John Peat**
Tel: 015395 32244

Trustees: **Alan Bryan**
Tel: 01458 446499

Gordon Pitt
Tel: 015395 68210

Peter Ford
Tel:

Mick Fox
Tel: 01539 727531

Committee Chair: **Roger Atkinson**
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1 Mountain View
Kendal
LA9 4QT
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Secretary: **Rose East**
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Arnside
email: rose@rothko.fsworld.co.uk

Treasurer: **Val Calder**
Tel: 01539 815126 (work)
Tel: 01539 727109 (home)
86, Vicarage Drive
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LA9 5BA

Booking Secretary: **Hugh Taylor**
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LA9 4JB
email: MichaelFox@Southbank50.fsnet.co.uk

Members:

Bill Hogarth
Tel: 01539 728569

Krysia Niepokojczycka
Tel: 015395 60523

one place vacant

Other Information

2

Seathwaite Farm (for *Emergencies* only)
Tel: 017687 77284

High House Website www.k-fellfarers.co.uk.

OREAD HUTS (cost £2.50p. per night.)

Heathy Lea Cottage,
Baslow, Derbyshire.

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

Oread booking secretary

Colin Hobday
28, Cornhill



Next Edition of the Fellfarer:

