

**YORKSHIRE  
RAMBLERS'  
CLUB**

**JOURNAL  
2024**



# Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal, Volume XV, Number 1, 2024

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Front Cover: Wendy and Steve Richards on Huayna Potosi, Bolivia in May  
Back Cover: Tom Spencer on The Weep, Creise, Etive Meet in February

# The Cordillera Real, Bolivia 2024

16 May  
-2 June  
2024

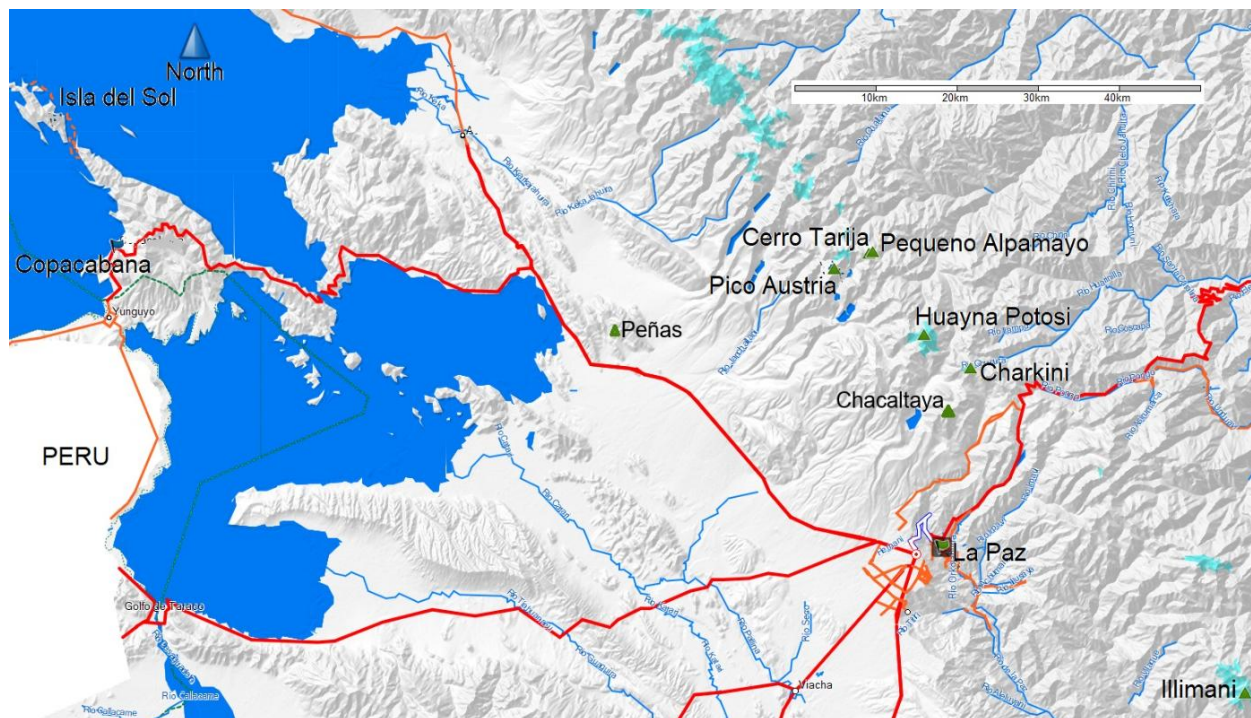
This trip was the fourth in a series of YRC visits to the Bolivian Andes spanning five decades. The earlier associations of the YRC with Bolivia are summarised in an article later in this Journal (see p20).

The report of this year's trip is set out in the following sections, broadly in chronological order:

- In and around La Paz (c3,650m);
- Hills on and around Lake Titicaca (c4,200m);
- Sport climbing at Peñas (c4,060m);
- Climbs from the Condoriri basecamp (c5,340m);
- The Zongo pass and Huayna Potosi (6,088m).

These locations were chosen for being more easily accessed from La Paz than the areas visited on previous trips. Once again, Javier Thellaeche Snr. of Andean Summits assisted with planning and José Camarlinghi provided logistical support throughout the trip.

The considerable time and cost involved in getting to Bolivia encouraged all but one of the members to plan extensions to the core activity. These trips are also described elsewhere in this Journal (see p13).



*The Cordillera Real seen from near Copacabana: Condoriri Huayna Potosi Mururata Illimani*



Eight members gathered in La Paz after landing at El Alto airport (4,062m, 13,327 ft), most arriving around 2am: Toby Dickinson; Steve McCain; Steve & Wendy Richards; Fiona, Richard & Michael Smith; and Richard Taylor. They needed a few days to recover from long flights and adapt to the altitude, and La Paz is an interesting place to do that.



*The city of La Paz with Mururata and Illimani behind. The latter was climbed on the 1988 trip*

**In and around La Paz (c3,650m);**

Initially walking up the dozen steps to the El Museo Hotel door was exhausting but a couple of days of browsing the city’s markets, churches and museums resulted in this being at least achievable without stopping. Using several of the city’s ten interconnected gondola lines gave access to the lip of the altiplano and an appreciation of the layout of the metropolis. Another newer city, El Alto, had appeared on the altiplano around the airport over recent decades. It was on the lip of the bowl there that a few rogues staged a distraction and attempted to rob Steve McCain but he quickly saw them off.

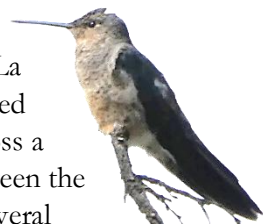
A couple of days after arriving in La Paz, Richards Taylor and Smith, and Michael took a taxi towards the Zongo Pass and turned right up to Cerro Chacaltaya, parking below the derelict ski hut at 5,240m, above the ruins of a cosmic particle detector connected with Leeds University. Gasping for air when walking gently up the 5,421m hill

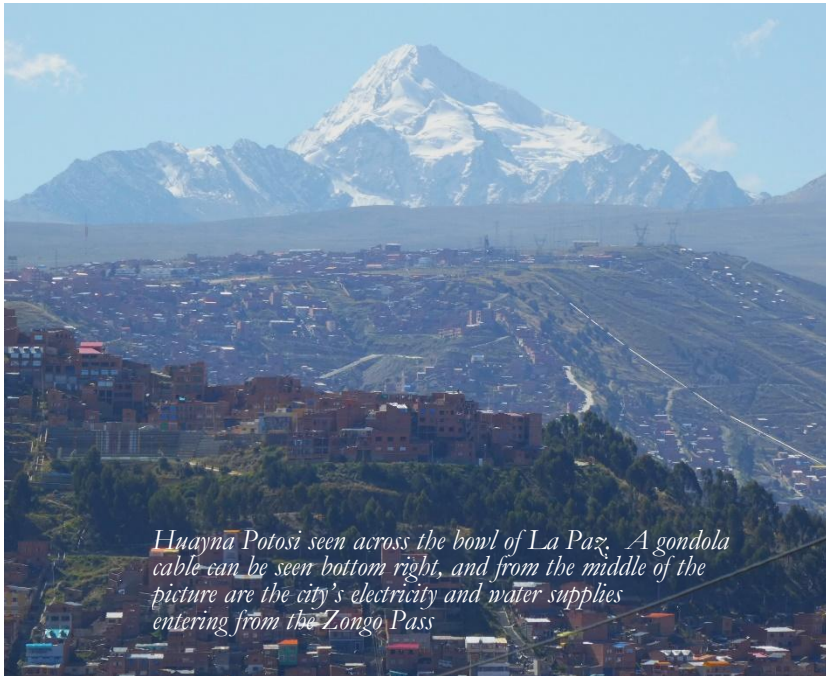
*The last slope on 5,435m Chacaltaya required several pauses.*



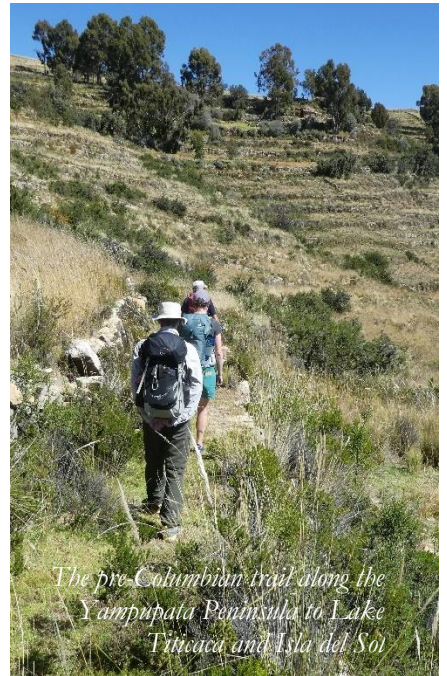
and pausing often to lower the pulse rate was a clear indication that a more gradual acclimatisation was required.

On a ridge 15km southeast of the city centre lies La Muela del Diablo (left, 3,825m) which we all walked slowly up to through steep mud canyons and across a farmed plateau for a gully scramble to a col between the molar’s two jagged cusps. Along the way were several flickers (woodpeckers), hummingbirds, caracaras and butterflies galore. We were now ready for longer outings.





*Huayna Potosi seen across the bowl of La Paz. A gondola cable can be seen bottom right, and from the middle of the picture are the city's electricity and water supplies entering from the Zongo Pass*



*The pre-Columbian trail along the Yampupata Peninsula to Lake Titicaca and Isla del Sol*

### **The hills on and around Lake Titicaca (c4,200m)**

Beyond the traffic chaos of El Alto, the three-hour drive was on good roads northwest to Lake Titicaca, the minibus crossing the Tiquina Strait on a raft, then on to the Yampupata Peninsula. There, from Sampaya, a pre-Columbina path took us along and over terraces to scramble down a small crag to a boatyard and piers. A few kilometres by private launch saw us at the foot of the Inca stairway on the Isla del Sol. The hour's effort up these steps and a kilometre along the ridge to our destination, the Palla Khasa Ecolodge, was relieved by stunning eastward views of the mightiest massifs of the Cordillera Real. As the temperature plummeted that night, the Southern Cross was clear.

The next day, we walked the remainder of the island's crest with views north to the Apolobamba range on the Peruvian border, before visiting the Tiwanacan ruins of the



Chincana Labyrinth. Doubling back east to the port of Challapampa, we met our return boat for Yampupata and the drive to the relative luxury of Copacabana's Gloria Hotel.

There are sizeable hills to the south skirting Copacabana, some are craggy, all have thorny shrubs and grasses with dart-like seeds which we collected efficiently in our socks and trainers. From the hotel we trekked past the Horca del Inca ruins, searched for a way over Pacht'aqa to radio-masted Cerro San Sebastian and southeast to a rocky top with a steep descent to a series of tracks back to the hotel. Only 780m ascent in 13km but we were getting faster and breathing more easily. On that walk viscacha were seen, a relative of chinchillas (right).

A 'rest day' saw members disperse to different activities. Three to 4,344m Cerro Huilacollo on the Peruvian border, crossing it for lunch out of the wind, no risk of detention by border patrols. Below were numerous small rock constructions, some like model



farms, which we understood to be places of offerings (including Pisco) to the deities in the hope of someday getting such things. From that top could be seen both Volcan Sajama (visited in 1999) to the south and the Apolobamba (visited in 1988) to the north, these being at least 360km apart. Others traversed Cerro Calvario overlooking the local bay, played mini golf, attempted to battle the bay's wind in a squeaky pedalo, and watched a women's football match.

Unfortunately, at this point we lost one of our members. When PM Rishi Sunak unexpectedly called a General Election, Toby had to dash back to London. If only Rishi had hesitated another two days, then we would have been in the mountains out of contact and Toby would have reaped the rewards of all that preparation. The rest of us were keen to move on to steeper things.

*Acclimatising above Copacabana: Jose, Michael, Richard, Wendy, Fiona, Toby, Steve R, and Steve McC*





### Sport climbing at Peñas (c4,060m)

The village of Peñas lies tucked behind a foothill ridge close to the easternmost bay of Lake Titicaca. From its new hostel is the Parque Adventura, a flank of the ridge with over a kilometre of crags and scores of sport climbs. One crag entertained us for an afternoon of routes from grades 4 up to 5c. The nearby ridges provided a couple of hours exercise the next morning: 5km including a 4,300m top.



Then we were off to main Andean chain and the high peaks of the Cordillera Real.



*Panorama:*

*Pico Austria - Condoriri*

*Cerro Tarija - Camp*

### Climbs from the Condoriri basecamp (c5,340m)

The rough drive to the Rinaconda roadhead had kicked a small pebble into the minibus' brake drum. On arrival, Sixto impressively removed the wheel and extracted the offending item - no roadside recovery service here. Meanwhile our pack animals had arrived and, once their young daughter had chased after and retrieved a donkey which would have preferred to eat the shrubs, their handlers were loading up and we walked the few kilometres up above the large tarn, Ch'iyar Quta, to the 4,700m base camp area below Condoriri.

Llamas, alpacas, Andean geese, horses, and the occasional donkey grazed the slopes around the camp alongside caracara, glacier finches, tyrants, small rodents and viscacha – a truly magical setting.



A close shave happened while one party were preparing to leave. Their loosely tethered together ponies and mules started wheeling then rearing and charging around. Their arriero ran in to try and hold



*Richard Taylor, Jose and Steve Richards on the top of Pico Austria*

them was buffeted and knocked over. He could have been badly injured but he returned to his jeering mates dusting off his trilby. Such people make a hazardous living.

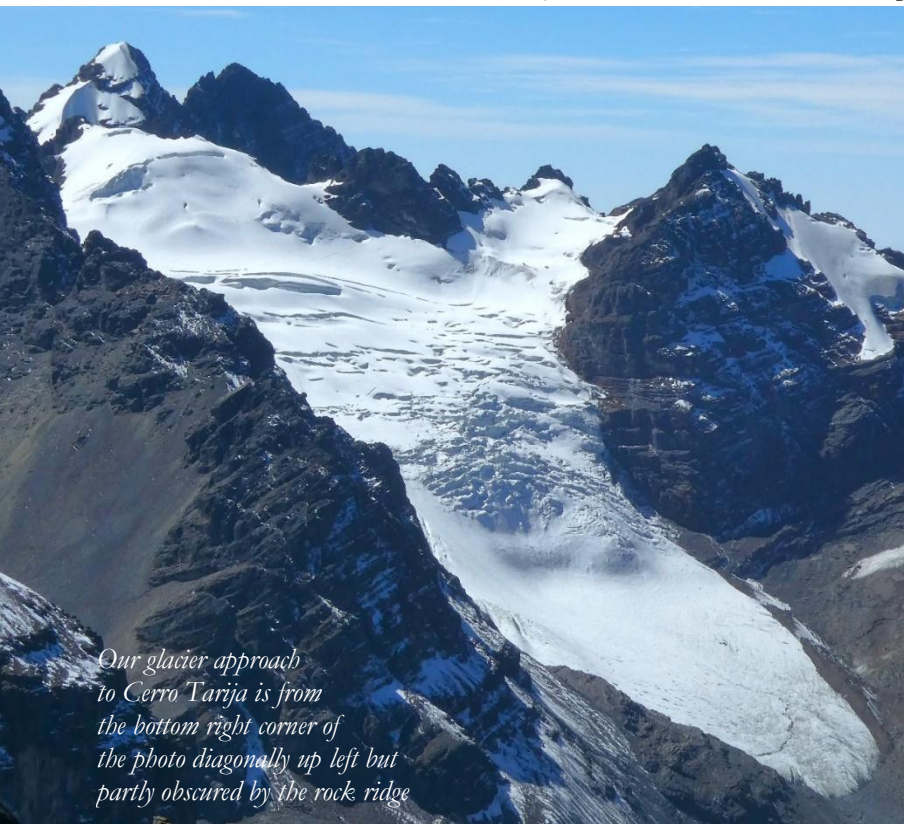
Our cook, Lucrecia, assisted by her son, Eduardo, had set up a kitchen in a small building while our individual and mess tents were erected. The food was intentionally mainly vegetarian, attractive, varied and served with plenty of hot drinks.

Being only 16° south of the equator and almost winter, sunset was at 6pm, so immediately after that the temperature dropped to a minimum of -11°C. Sunrise was about 7am but being in a steep-sided valley it was much later that we benefited from any solar warming.

Pico Austria, 5,347m, was the first objective, a walk over scree and paths to the west of

basecamp. With the increased altitude our pace slackened on the steeper section nearing the ridge to turn south after 5,152m Paso Chakoti, to the windy summit. The views of Condoriri and our remaining objectives, Cerro Tarija and Huayna Potosi, were literally awesome.

Condoriri's three steep icy summits looked like a condor stood with its wings held out – hence its name. Across the altiplano were the



*Our glacier approach to Cerro Tarija is from the bottom right corner of the photo diagonally up left but partly obscured by the rock ridge*



classic shapes of Volcans Sajama and Parinacota. Pico Austria was a 5.2km round trip with 650m ascent in 3¼ hours. Richard Smith made a fast descent on scree. Steve McCain followed at a steadier pace.

That afternoon we checked and packed our glacier gear, had our meal then retired earlier than usual.

Awake at 2:30 for a 4:10 starlit start up the valley we gained the lower slopes of the glacier from a lateral moraine. We mostly followed crampon marks on the steepening surface up 5,349m Cerro Tarija, winding left then right and ending in a small rocky summit. Our second breakfast there was accompanied by grand views of Condoriri's northern slopes, Pequeño Alpamayo to the east, Huayna Potosi to the southeast and far away to the southwest, Volcan Sajama, Bolivia's highest mountain.

Ahead was a drop and tricky ascent to steeper Pequeño Alpamayo, but having only one axe each we turned back, descending more directly to camp by noon for a quiet afternoon.

A rest day followed with people heading off in different directions. Two pairs go southeast past several Andean geese to Passo Condoriri for views towards Tuni and Huayna Potosi. The siblings return to the glacier snout to practice climbing steep ice. Fiona later walks around the lake below camp.

For tomorrow's move to our last area, further east, we again reorganise our kit.

### Tragedy on Ch'iyar Quta

Late that afternoon, a group of several descending Israeli tourists and their Bolivian guide boarded a small rowing boat with their mountain gear and set off across the 600m wide water. Part way across the boat capsized. The visitors could swim and wade ashore but the Bolivian drowned. Some gear was lost. The next day the Bomberos de la Policía Boliviana arrived from La Paz to investigate but by then the visitors were long gone.



*Richard Taylor  
arriving at Cerro  
Tarija's summit,  
secured by Javier*

## **The Zongo pass (4,700m) and Huayna Potosi (6,088m).**

The taxi excursion towards the Zongo Pass to sample the thin air on 2,421m Chacaltaya has already been described. The final area for this trip lay at the col at the valley's end by the large dammed Laguna Zongo. We moved into a refuge there for one night. That reservoir feeds a string of HEP plants to the east, powering La Paz and El Alto back to the west. Water pipes also supply these cities from the glaciers.

The following morning, we walked an hour eastward along a narrow aqueduct wall across slopes and across the faces of crags requiring confident balance and a good head for heights. At Laguna Canada we had a good view of the next day's objective, Huayna Potosi.

That afternoon our route up to the high refuge at 5,155m was across the reservoir dam, along another aqueduct, up rock ribs, and a moraine crest. After sorting gear, we had a meal and an early night but little sleep, partly on account of others' comings and goings.



Rising at 3am for a 4am departure, it was neither windy nor especially cold. Steeper rock ribs, one iced up and with a thin frayed handline, took us to a hollow below a tongue of the glacier. With the Smiths as one rope, Richard Taylor with Javier Thellaeche Jr., the Richards with Teche, and Steve with Jose, we follow crampon marks up the fairly steep glacier winding past crevasses. Beyond an area of fallen ice we traversed across a short near



*Fiona and Richard Smith,  
Steve and Wendy Richards with Mururata and Ilimani behind*

vertical section with a beaten ledge and thin handline across it. After a gentler slope another rise landed us on a shelf below the bergschrund and summit slope. Michael and Steve McCain, both suffering from digestion complaints, stop there at c5,900m. Richard Taylor reached the summit cone at 6,000m before turning back on account of the hour.

Above was a steeper slope (see front cover) then a zig-zag and a flatter 200m to the unmarked 6,088m summit. Richard and Fiona were joined there by Wendy, Steve and Teche. There is no higher peak within 60km and besides the many peaks of the Cordillera Real they had clear views over the altiplano and down into the Yungas.

The descent was straightforward taken more directly where there were no significant crevasses. We met up again at the hollow before returning to the cabin for soup and going back to the refuge this time avoiding the exposed aqueduct. A celebratory beer and we were back in the mini-bus for the drive to La Paz. A meal at the Tomate Pizzeria finished a long day.

You might expect we had a slower start the next morning and you would be right, except for Fiona who was up before dawn for a drive out to La Cumbre and a mountain bike ride down the '*Ruta de la Muerte*' or Death Road towards Coroico. Richard and Michael Smith paid a lunchtime visit to Eli's Confitería – something of a tradition for Michael. Soon after that everyone went off for their own extension activities which are briefly described below.

Attendees: Toby Dickinson, Steve McCain, Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Fiona Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith, Richard Taylor.





*Our mimibus with all our gear on the top crossing Titicaca's Tiquina Strait*

## Conclusions

Bolivia, and especially La Paz, is of cultural, historical and geological interest which can fill a few days of tourist activity, convenient for initial acclimatisation. Flying in to El Alto, at 4,150m highest international airport in the world, does not allow for the usual gradual acclimatisation to the altitude but all noticed a distinct improvement over the next few days as we explored the city gradually increasing our activity level.

The country is relatively safe, cheap for those used to European prices, and with a generally helpful, welcoming population. Hygienic sanitation and safety are not yet at a high standard. There are few problems access but information on the state of roads and opening times of, for example, parks may not be current. There is political unrest but it appears to be rarely widespread, violent, or unavoidable. We generally felt relaxed when, say, changing currency on the streets, or engaging with villagers in remote places.

Regarding this particular trip, the logistical support and catering were good. In the mountains, communications among the guides and with our members could have been clearer. It would probably have been better to set off up Huayna Potosi a couple of hours earlier. Acclimatisation might have been improved by moving earlier to Peñas and on to higher foothills, rather than Copacabana. A group with no wish to visit La Paz could go straight to Peñas on arrival to walk then climb.

So, given all these difficulties with travel, unrest, diets, thin air, harsh climate, demanding terrain, intense UV, unfamiliar situations, etc., not to mention the cost, why do we bother with such trips rather than sticking with European ranges? The amazing sights, sounds and smells; the sense of achievement in facing up to the greater challenges; the broadening of experience in meeting people of other cultures and seeing how they solve differently the problems we have in common; and the deeper relationships that develop through spending weeks working together with other members, are some of the enduring rewards.



*Potosi soup is poured into a bowl containing a very hot stone which beats up the soup so it bubbles away for several minutes.*



*Members and their support team at its greatest number, on the Zongo pass at the trip's end.  
Back row: Steve McCain, guide Jose Camarlinghi, aspirant guide Teche, Eduardo, and the Zongo  
refuge's assistant and owner. Middle row: Wendy Richards, Richard Smith, Fiona Smith, Javier.  
Front row: driver Sixto, Michael Smith, Steve Richards, cook Lucrecia Chambi and Richard Taylor.*





*The route on Huayna Potosi, 6,088m*

*The remainder of the team on a pinnacle at Peñas following Toby's return to London:  
Fiona and Richard Smith  
Steve Richards and Steve McCain  
Richard Taylor and Wendy Richards,  
and Michael Smith.*

*Steve Richards, Teche, Jose, Steve McCain, Javier,  
Richard and Fiona Smith, Wendy Richards, and  
Michael Smith at the Condoriri Basecamp well  
insulated and ready for the arrival of the soup.*



# South American Extensions

## Floating island homes, a festival, Incan ruins, and Pacific cliffs

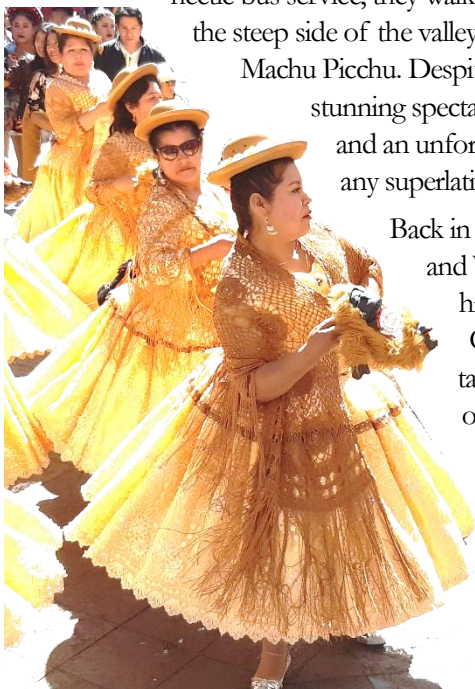
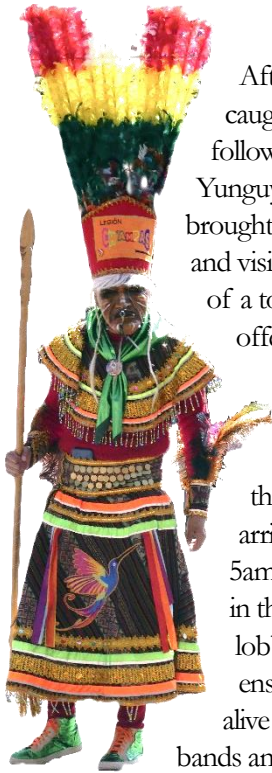
After a final mooch around the markets of La Paz, Steve and Wendy Richards caught the 'Bolivia Hop' coach headed for Peru. A stop back in Copacabana was followed by a smooth border crossing at Khasani, close to the Peruvian town of Yunguyo. A few more hours of winding roads along the shore of Lake Titicaca brought them to Puno for an overnight stop. The next day was spent exploring the town and visiting the Uros settlements on the floating reed islands of Titicaca. Although a bit of a tourist 'tick', the visit offered a glimpse into centuries old way of life.

Back on the coach that evening, the pair arrived in Cusco at 5am, dozing for a while in the ice cold hotel

lobby before warming up on a cafe balcony overlooking the main square. The ensuing week marked the end of Corpus Christi celebrations and the town was alive with festival activities: multi-coloured dancing troupes swayed to latin percussion bands and heavy shrines were paraded through the streets on the shoulders of dozens of young men, whilst brightly dressed children danced and enjoyed the sunshine. There were fireworks, speeches, military parades and much more - the whole spectacle lasting a full week. The next morning, a two hour taxi journey took Steve and Wendy to Ollantaytambo. The train ride from Ollantaytambo to Aguas Calientes was a delight - stunning scenery winding through the mountains and gorges to reach the tourist hot spot and stepping off point for Machu Picchu. Rejecting the

hectic bus service, they walked the old Inca steps up the steep side of the valley to the historical site of Machu Picchu. Despite the crowds, it was a stunning spectacle, never feeling too busy and an unforgettable highlight, beyond any superlatives either could muster.

Back in Cusco the next day, Steve and Wendy explored the hillside ruins above Ollantaytambo, before taking the much cheaper option of a shared 'collectivo' taxi for eight people from the market square.





*Saqsaywaman*

The pair spent the next two days exploring around Cusco: the Saqsaywaman Inca ruins reachable on foot above the town and, via another colectivo, the extensive ruins at Pisac. Both sets of ruins were reached on foot from their villages.

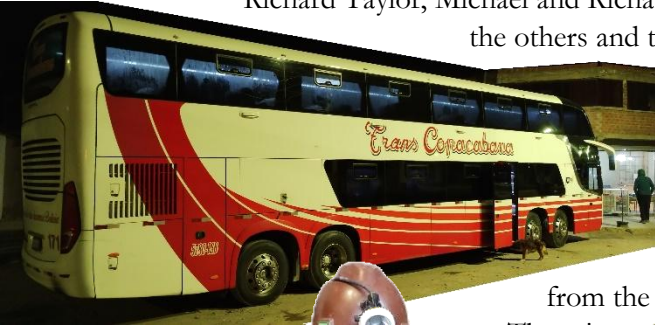
A short flight to Lima and they stayed in the pleasant coastal suburb of Barranco, with its easy Metro ride into the centre, for a day of sight seeing and cafe time. A pleasant cliff top walk finished their visit, before the flights home. (SR, WR)

### Cerro Rico and Potosi

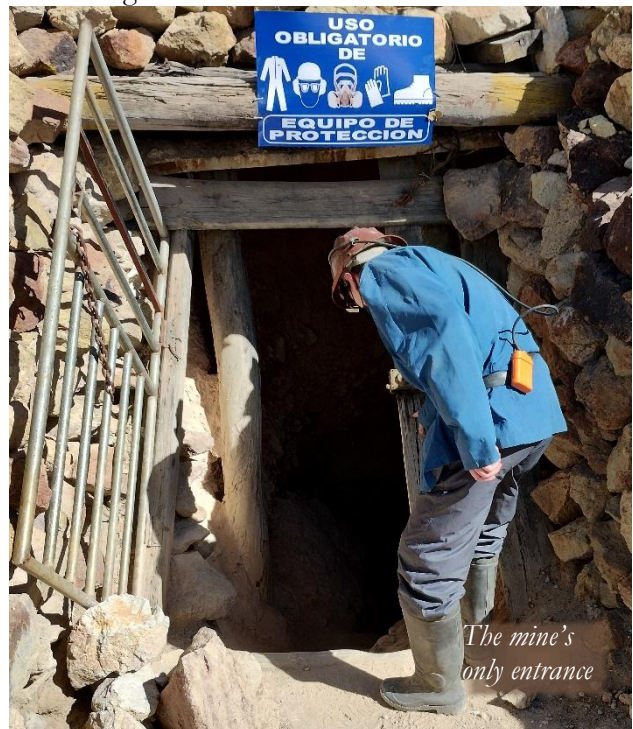
Richard Taylor, Michael and Richard Smith arrived in La Paz before most of the others and took an overnight bus 540km southeast to

Potosi spending two nights there before returning. They had booked a guide, Johnny, who got them kitted up and taken down one of the many still active mines on the lower slopes of Cerro Rico – the silver from which made the Spain rich from the 16<sup>th</sup> century until Bolivia's independence.

The mines are worked by cooperatives of ten or fewer people so there is little mechanisation other than for raising ore to the surface. Two-ton tubs are man-handled along rails.



*Richard Taylor, dynamite and detonator in hand, with Johnny*



*The mine's only entrance*



Moving from level to level is reminiscent of Dales caving with steep spiralling tubes, little more than shoulder-width in places. Extracting the remaining zinc, tin and lead is still profitable. But all is not rosy. There were daily demonstrations by the miners against impending nationalisation of these mines. Besides chanting in the main square, they launched firework rockets and tossed lit sticks of dynamite into the air.

They visited some colonial legacy buildings: cathedral, convent, and mint, that last with a couple of wooden horse-powered crushing mills, the first shipped over in kit form then copied. On the way to the 'Ojo de Inca' steaming hot spring for a

necessarily short bathe, they stop to peer into La Cueva del Diablo in a canyon pass, but it was gated. Supposedly, St Bartholome banished the mischievous devil there. (MS)



### **The Salar, Volcanoes, Geysers and El Alto**

It is all too easy on mountaineering expedition to focus only on the climbing and to fly into a country- do the business - and then head home. Whenever possible I have tried to tack on at the end of an expedition some exploration of the host country. After this Bolivian trip Steve McCain and I decided to take a week to explore the south of the country and neighbouring Chile, which respectively contain the Salar de Uyuni and the Atacama Desert.

This necessitates travelling 500km south to Uyuni using one of the numerous bus companies servif this route daily. We could have taken all our climbing gear but it was much easier to travel light (but warm) with a small sack containing a sleeping bag (never used). This alternative does require a return to La Paz for flights home. Otherwise we could have flown home from Chile. Both alternatives require careful planning to link up with chosen flights.



These comfortable buses all leave La Paz around 2200 and can be booked a day or more in advance at the bus station. Backpacks are stowed under your seat and the temperature can be either too hot or too cold, depending on the driver. A water bottle and small snack is all you need to avoid frequenting the 3am stop at the driver's favourite haunt. The toilet on board is advertised 'for light use' but in extremis this is not policed.

We had booked a three-day trip through Howlanders (an agency based in Spain) who talked to on an arranged WhatsApp call. They subcontracted the trip to Skyline Traveller which gave us peace of mind that we wouldn't have to wait a day, and also that we'd be met at 0500 in very cold Uyuni and taken to a coffee shop for breakfast before joining the tour at 0900. Transport was by a Toyota Landcruiser for six of us (plus driver). We had not requested an English-speaking guide but were fortunate that Argentinian passenger translate

as the driver's poor English for us. Although the vehicle had done 300,000km it held together well over some incredibly rough services at equally incredible (but safe) speeds. We travelled with another of their vehicles in case of breakdown. Our trip took us to the Train Cemetery, Incahuasi Island (a cacti covered 'island' in the middle of the salt flat), Laguna Colorada, the geysers field 'Sol de Manana', the thermal waters 'Termas de Polques', and the Green and White Lagoons. All meals,



a night at a salt hotel and another in a more basic hostel were included.

It was probably one of the best trips we have ever been on.

*Dawn when El Tatio geyser field is at its most dramatic*



At the end you can either be returned to Uyuni or (as we did) be dropped off at the Chilean border. Customs and immigration are simple but leisurely and are followed by a bus ride down to San Pedro de Atacama (continuing the Howlanders itinerary). We had booked accommodation there using on booking.com, as the tour here is a succession of day trips out and back. Howlanders had subcontracted these to Atacama Magic who were very efficient and punctual. We took a three-day tour which included stargazing, Valley of the Moon, and an 0500 start to the Tatio Geysers and finished at the Cejar Lagoon to float in salt water.

Surprisingly we had not been able to find out through Howlanders how were going to get back to La Paz but this added to the sense of exploration as in this part of the world there are always ways. We found and advance booked the daily Cruz del Norte bus from San Pedro to Uyuni leaving at 0330 and reaching in Uyuni in the early afternoon. This was a fantastic drive through the desert and up to the Altiplano. We then caught yet another night bus back to La Paz arriving at 0700. (RT)



If one's travel experience has been largely in Britain, it may be difficult to grasp the scale of their travels on the above trip. They crossed the world's largest salt flat, the Salar de Uyuni. With an area of 10,582sq.km, that's 90% of the size of Yorkshire, but flat, almost

completely featureless. And fringed with volcanoes on one side, mountains on the other. Apart from being very impressed there is little to do there other than pose for amusing photos.

The Atacama Desert, the driest non-polar desert, is even larger, equivalent to nine Yorkshires, and 1,600km in length along the Chilean coast.

### **El Camino del Muerte**

Shunning the idea of a rest, the day after summiting Huayna Potosi, Fiona signed up to cycle down El Camino del Muerte or Death Road, often described as the world's most dangerous road. Starting above La Paz at La Cumbre pass (4,700m), our bikes were blessed with 98% proof alcohol, a swig also helped Fiona get over any pre-ride nerves. The first half of the route was on asphalt with optional uphill sections before turning off to start the real 'Death Road' heading down from the Cordillera Real, into the Yungas, the higher reaches of the Amazonas.



Before being bypassed in 2006 the road was legendary for its death toll. With between 200-300 people dying each year as vehicles went off the road and down the drops of over 400m. Now it is mainly a tourist destination and thirty cyclists have been killed by losing control and going over the road's edge.

It was an amazing ride down. The cloud coming in and out making the view dynamic and the hillside is covered in trees and vegetation, so different from the barren altiplano and mountains. Plus, there's the fun of cycling under waterfalls and through streams. In the 64km ride, the party descended 3,542m, reaching the Sanda Verde animal sanctuary in the Yungas. The jungle was lovely and warm compared to the start. An exhilarating and an unforgettable experience which felt safe despite the road's reputation.

### Lima, Peru



Richard and Fiona had a longer stopover in Lima than they planned. Hours after boarding their flight home they were disembarked because of a runway lights failure. They



visited the Pacific coast and the city's historic centre with its colonial-era buildings including the Archbishop's Palace (above).

They explored Lima's foody scene including ceviche which is generally considered to be Peru's national dish. It is raw fish or seafood in a citrus-based marinade called leche

de tigre or "tiger's milk", served with sweet potato slices and the local popcorn, canchita. As a sweet dessert they had churros which are long cylindrical deep-fried dough with a hole down the middle with any of several warm, sweet, gooey flavoured fillings. All washed down of course with pisco sour cocktails, made with brandy, lemon juice, egg white and sugar.



## Bogotá, Colombia

Michael stopped off for a day's visit to Colombia's capital, mostly strolling around La Candelaria, with a local guide. This is a cobblestoned colonial-era area some new age, modern and neoclassical buildings. They toured the Teatro Colón (as old as the YRC), the 17<sup>th</sup> century Iglesia de San Francisco and part of Museo Botero. Fernando Botero's art features grossly rotund figures.

Close by is La Merced with English Tudor- and early Victorian-style residences built in the 1930s and '40s by British Petroleum Co. A nearby



coffee roasting and grinding house was approached warily as further down its road is a problem area with the least lawful fraction of Bogotá's half-million Venezuelan refugees, unemployed and turning to extortion. However, Michael's immediate problem when considering purchasing coffee was converting the price in tens of thousands of Colombian Pesos into sterling.

## El Alto's Cholets

On their return to La Paz, Richard took the opportunity to see some of the more exotic offering of El Alto, the new city growing on the Altiplano



beside La Paz. Cholitas are the indigenous Bolivian women, proud of their heritage but often savvy in business. Exploiting profitable cross-border transport opportunities,



some have grown to operate fleets of large trucks, built multistorey warehouses with garaging on the ground floor, then built extravagant homes on top. Called cholets, derived from *cholitas'* *chalets*, they express urban indigeneity with amazing ingenuity.

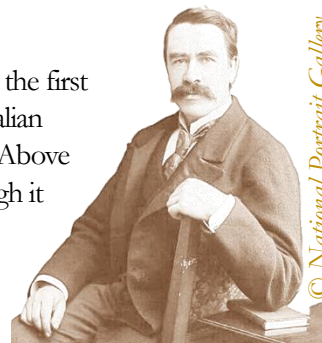
# The YRC and Bolivia

Michael  
Smith

## Pre-1970

Honorary Member Martin Conway, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Conway of Allington, in 1898, made the first recorded ascent of Illimani, the obvious mountain visible from La Paz. With two Italian guides he crossed Pico del Indio 6,109m, to gain the summit, Pico Norte 6,403m. Above 6,000m they found an ancient Aymara rope so an earlier ascent is a possibility though it is generally considered the area's first significant expedition. Later, they almost reached the summit of Ancohumá in the Cordillera Real by Lake Titicaca.

In 1967, near Ancohumá, member Tony Smythe with Dave Challis and Robert Hall made second ascents of Viluyo II (5,605m) and Hancopiti I (5,860m), first ascents of Quimsacollo (5,892m) and Lloca de Ancohumá (6,057m), then a 5,547m peak a mile north of Hancopiti I, which they called Buena Vista. Smythe and Challis then made the second ascent of Taparacu's twin peaks (5,748m and 5,736m) and, northeast of Ancohumá, the first ascents of both Halta Tahuá (c.5,599m) and Cunotahuá (5,981m). They also climbed Monte Triángulo (5,672m) and Pico de Línea (c.5,608m)



© National Portrait Gallery

## 1979 Aug., 12 days – Cordillera Real -

Soon after becoming a member, Michael Smith and a friend, Nick Sutton, made an ascent of Wila Mankilizani (5,324m) before backpacking the Sierra Almillanis to La Paz. They traversed Chacaltaya (5,375m) past a tin mine to Milluni and the Zongo reservoir to camp at about 5,300m under the south ridge of Huayna Potosí. Michael soloed up onto the narrow ridge and some distance along it until considering it wiser to retreat. They later trekked trans-Andean trails: La Cumbre to Chuchuca, Chairó, Yolosa, to reach Coroico; and Huancapampa to Mina San Francisco, Mururata glacier snout, the Taquesi pass, Campamentos Minera David and Minero Inca, to Chojilla.



## 1988 Jul/Aug., 39 days – Cordillera Apolobamba

Following the success of the Club's 1982 Munros meet, Peter Swindells and Alan Kay encouraged the Club to commit to an expedition or remote trek every four years. The first of these was to the Apolobamba range straddling the border with Peru with a team of six: Michael Smith, David Hick, Ian Crowther, Harvey Lomas, David Martindale, and John Sterland. New routes were climbed by David Hick and Michael from the valley above Nubi Pampa: Cerro Cololo's south ridge (5,915m) and Nevado Nubi's southwest ridge (5,710m). For acclimatisation they climbed Huayna Potosí as far as the bergschrund, then Nevado Illimani (6,438m) at the end of the expedition.





### 1999 Jun/Jul., 26-41 days – Cordilleras Cocapata and Real

The Cocapata range are above Cochabamba with several tops almost 5000m but had only two earlier reported climbing visits: 1911 and 1997. David Hick, Tim Josephy, Duncan Mackay, Rory Newman and Michael Smith climbed in the area for two weeks and made ascents of ten mountains with no previous recorded ascents. Climbs were made on Jatuncasa and Willpanki I & II.

Meanwhile the trekking group of David Atherton, Derek Bush, Albert Chapman, Ian Crowther, Alan Kay, Alan Linford and David Smith trekked from near Sorata through the Cordillera Real past the Condoriri basin and out via Tuni.

Nine from across both parties then went on to climb Sajama, 6,542m, followed by two continuing into

Chile's Atacama desert and traverse Volcan Ollague (5,968m) in the western Cordillera.

### 2010 Aug., 15-22 days – Quimsa Cruz

The Cordillera Quimsa Cruz are south of Cerro Illimani in the Cordillera Real. The trekking party were Rob Ibberson, Fiona Smith, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith and guests Sarah Broadhead and Gabrielle Ibberson. The week's trek was a circuit from Cuchi Mocoya above Viloco, to Mina Nevado via a 5,050m pass, Choquetanga Chico, Calvariuni and the Peñis pass. A 4b rock route was top-roped by Richard at over 4,200m. The Smiths later descended into the Yungas to San Miguels del Bala downstream from the Apolobamba range.

### 2024 – Cordillera Real

See page 1 in this issue for details of this trip.

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*Helen Brevitt and Toby Dickinson on Mastiles Lane, Conistone meet*

## 2024's Meets

*LHG working meet: Alister is supervised by John Thurston, Carol and John Whalley.*



*Common Sundews  
Elphin, Northwest Highlands*







With good winter climbing conditions in Scotland there was some hope of snow in the Lakes for this traditional first meet of the year in Little Langdale. This was not to be, though walking conditions were good and there was surprising activity on the meet. The saturated ground of recent weeks had largely drained with some ice patches having formed on the fells. An overnight sprinkling of snow on Saturday iced the tops of the higher fells. A change from recent years was the Three Shires

Inn opening for the meet weekend, a couple of weeks earlier than its usual January closure.

Arriving on Thursday, Mark found his new key didn't work but luckily Hut Warden Alister was there to let him in. Mark then went over to Tarn Howes. Ged and Imogen Campion met Mark then headed to Raven Crag, Yewdale, for a grade 1\*\*\* scramble.

On Friday Mark walked with a Rucksack Club friend making a verglas scramble up Long Crag to Wetherlam through a superb cloud inversion, seeing a Brocken spectre for the first time, returning via Swirl Howe and the Carrs. Later that afternoon, he joined Sheffields, Kim and Michael on a through trip of Cathedral Cavern and a dusk inspection of Slater Bridge.



*Kim, Robert, Alan  
Mark Toby*

A good fire was soon warming the hut. Alan's catering kicked off with snacks followed by a welcome hotpot and bread. Fuelled and possibly inspired by Bacchus, god of wine, the



*Robert, Michael, and Kim  
below Slater Bridge, 7am*

Crowthers, egged on by Kim, planned a 6:30 rise for a 7am dip in the infant River Brathay. Alan promised them a fried breakfast on their return.

At this season and that time of the morning, there would be difficulties in getting photographic evidence of the wild swimming, or at least



enthusiastic dipping, so the escapade was witnessed by a couple of fully-clad, warmer members. As if the entertainment of the three cautiously entering the near-freezing water and steeling themselves for full immersion was not enough, on emerging, Crowther Minor led them in a swaying grunting haka to speed drying and improve circulation before towelling off.

One might expect this to have been a ‘one off’ activity but no... Kim and Michael were down there again on Sunday morning at dawn. Your reporter hopes such starts to the day do not become *de rigueur* on meets.

Saturday’s walking got off to an early start. John and Alan had a good fossicking day in Langdale and purchased extra fuel. Martyn and the Crowthers crossed Slater Bridge, traversed Lingmell Moor to Blea Tarn, checked out the beer at the ODG before returning past Blea Tarn and into the Three Shires Inn.

Conrad and Mark made a pathless ascent of Pike O’Blisco from Wrynose Bridge in mist and drizzle, a slightly icy decent down into the Langdale Valley and up Side Pike then Lingmoor Fell, all in welcome sunshine, ending up with the team in Little Langdale at the Three Shires Inn.

Prospective members Kim and Toby accompanied Michael S up Wet Side Edge, over cloud-shrouded Swirl How and Prison Band to emerge into clear, sunnier weather for frozen Wetherlam and the descent of Steel Edge. They took the more northerly Tilberthwaite Gill path to join the track to the ford then added to the throng in the pub.



*Conrad on the  
only ice to be  
found on Pike  
O’Blisco*

Back at Low Hall Garth, Ged arrived on a hut warden's visit planning future developments. He also headed up to the quarries in search of potential future lines.

Alan was aided by Kim in the kitchen preparing the evening meal of a cottage pie made with corned beef with beetroot and mixed vegetables, followed by Christmas pudding and cheese.



Sunday was cool with good views from the lower fells but cloud later shrouding the higher tops. Most managed to get another day on the fells but Conrad was away to meet other members climbing at Almscliffe (see Chippings).



Mark went solo on Sunday on a walk up Greenburn for a wintery scramble ascent of Great Carrs Buttress – mostly on frozen gully turf, back along frozen Prison Band to Swirl Howe where the sunshine arrived for an ascent of Wetherlam, then an icy descent on a vague line from Wetherlam back down into the Greenburn Valley.

Michael S, Toby and Kim went over Loughrigg from near Skelwith Bridge to stroll

along the busy Terrace to the quarry, returning over quieter Scartufts.

The Club cottage was looking good after its coat of paint thanks to Ged, Alister and their team. Alan's catering was the usual high standard with plenty of hearty fare to keep us

going. Once again, the LHG meet got the year off to a good start with drier days out for members unlike most years of late – except for the wild swimmers of course.

Attendees:

Ged Campion (day visitor),  
 Alan Clare, Michael Crowther,  
 Robert Crowther,  
 Toby Dickinson (PM), John Jenkin,  
 Kim Randall (PM), Mark Rothwell,  
 Michael Smith, Conrad Tetley,  
 Martyn Trasler.

*Swirl Howe memorial and wreckage on Sunday*





*Looking down Glen Etive with the hut being below the whisp of cloud by the lochan*

For YRC members who like their glens saturated with water rather than midges, a February trip to Glen Etive is highly recommended. The Club's first recorded trip to Glen Etive seems to have been made by W<sup>m</sup> Cecil Slingsby in April 1896, and the Club has been making use of the Grampian Club's Inbhirfhaolain hut since the 1960s. Several members present had been regulars on Inbhirfhaolain meets over the decades, including Alan Linford, attending what he feels may have been his last Inbhirfhaolain trip after many visits over the years. Alan braved the weather and the hut's basic facilities and put in at least as many miles walking over the weekend as the rest of the group.

David Large, Ignacio Corradini and Tom Spencer were the first to arrive at Inbhirfhaolain at around 5pm on Friday only to find the key safe containing two and a half keys, rather than the expected three. After a period of uncertain and frustrated stuffing of wrong keys in wrong locks they established the broken key had been the one for the padlock on the main door of the hut.

*"As I arrived, with the fire going in the main room, and the wood panelling, the hut was really cosy. The location is spectacular."*

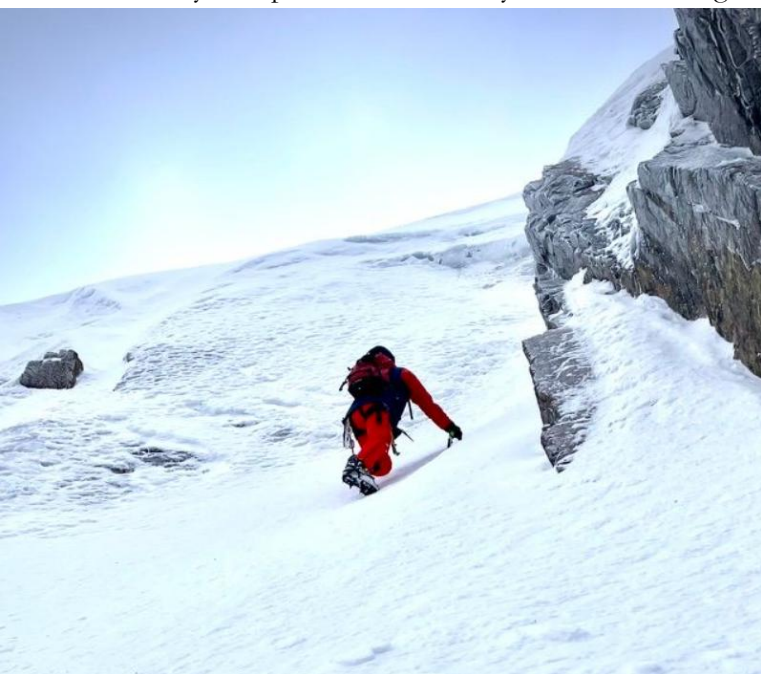


A quick survey was made of the impenetrable fortress that is Inbhirfhaolain, with mutterings of lock breaking with ice axes, rocks, and other tools of the trade. The trio resorted to a six-mile drive back to an area of phone reception and eventually a number was found for the hut warden in Dundee. Once David had persuaded the warden that a member of the YRC could sound so un-Yorkshire, information was provided: a spare key was to be found *“under the 4th rock from the water butt”*. Six return miles later, a faint hint of plastic could be viewed by torchlight among a mass of roots. A long-forgotten time capsule, no doubt placed by the founders of the Grampian Club. With a degree of expressive effort Tom unknotted the eight plastic bags, opened the plastic container therein and found The Spare Key. They were in.



On Friday, David, Ignacio (top) and Tom climbed ‘The Weep’ (200m, III) on Sron na Creise, with thawing but good, thick ice on a frozen waterfall at about 500-700m altitude. This is on the left as one turns from the road leaving Rannoch and into Glen Etive.

Buoyed by their success on the icefall, David, Ignacio and Tom rose at five on Saturday, left about six and were stomping up from the north face car park on Ben Nevis by 7.30. What could go wrong in a team comprising a youthful postgraduate student, a skilled horse vet, and a middle-aged professor? Start with the middle-aged professor stepping on some ice outside the CIC hut, landing on his head and almost knocking himself unconscious. Possible concussion was assessed thoroughly by the vet over the next hour, pain killers (ibuprofen not ketamine) were offered then they continued, some more gingerly than others, into Coire na Ciste. Their target was Number Three Gully Buttress (Grade III/IV). By 1.20 pm an enthusiastic youth and an energetic vet were constructing a belay below a



considerable icefall. Having assumed he was heading to a winter meet with dreadful weather, David had wisely left any excess ice-screws and pitons back in Nottingham. It would be a challenging, super-icy route in a rope of three. The realisation at 1.30 that there was, at best, four hours of daylight left was a further drain on the team’s spirits, except for the vet who dashed across the nearest snowfield and started building a toilet out of snow. Better there than the belay ledge. Relief.



Up Number Three Gully they went instead. The left branch was about Grade II and youthful enthusiasm tackled a crumbing cornice on the right (above). Sunshine, flat calm, good views and snow buntings greeted the team on top. Descent was by Number Four Gully then back to the car. A good time was had by all, in the end.

Meanwhile, the Smiths were arriving after a nip up Beinn a' Dorain, with Richard adding Beinn an Dothaidh while Michael returned a lost whistle to a passing SMC member who had, in Greenland, carried

Michael's emergency rescue beacon on loan to a mutual friend. It is a small world.

Following a mid-morning arrival at the hut, Steve and Wendy Richards walked up steep Stob Dubh into winter conditions and cloud which broke on the top, revealing a good view of Ben Nevis. Having followed the ridge, they dropped down to the col at Mam Buidhe and descended east to the Lairig Gartain for a walk in darkness back to the hut (top left).



Aaron Oakes completed a solo traverse of Ben Starav, ascending via the north ridge and dropping down east via Stob Coire Dheirg to gain the path north to the glen. Other members travelling up on Saturday paused in Tyndrum to watch that day's Six Nations fixtures. They arrived to find Alan re-engineering Rebecca's crampon to fit her boots.

On Sunday, six of the group – Toby, Conrad, Rebecca, Michael, and both Richards (the elder nursing a bruised tailbone) – walked over Ben Starav following Aaron's route (left). The ground was acceptable, with frozen turf from 600m and a few banks of névé. Snow

showers turned to rain later in the afternoon, and visibility was down to about 50m on the top. The group split at Stob Coire Dheirg, Richard S and Conrad continuing east to Glas Bheinn Mhor before returning (and nearly catching) the others heading back to the car park in the dark. Happily, Richard T completed the day without causing any further trauma to his tailbone (though minus his axe lost in heather down by the bridge). Less happily, Rebecca demonstrated her resilience in the wet-snow-on-wet-grass conditions with an unscheduled crouching glissade, coming to a halt thankfully intact.

Meanwhile, Alan strolled along Glen Etive, and Aaron headed up to Glenfinnan for a successful solo ascent of Munro Sgurr Thuilm.

Steve and Wendy headed for Bidean nam Bian before being foiled by poor conditions on the top: 10m visibility, snow and high winds. A steep ascent past Allt nan Easan waterfalls led into deteriorating weather and onto Stob Coire Sgreamhach. Serious cornices, lateness



of the hour, poor visibility, and the prospect of a hazardous descent route resulted in a turnaround at this point. The return via the east side of Allt nan Easan waterfalls proved just as steep and time consuming as expected.

*“I remember when there was no electricity, snow and ice in abundance, deer passing by, and cold, cold camping. Just the Elsan toilet or off into the forest with a shovel.”*

Monday’s weather suppressed enthusiasm. Richard Taylor got a lift to the head of Loch Etive to do a five-mile amble back to the hut, incorporating an unsuccessful attempt to find his ice axe. By Loch Linnhe, the Smiths walked the headlands of Cuil Bay until heavy rain set in. Some members took up the traditional poor-weather activity of ‘wandering around outdoor equipment shops in Fort William and trying not to spend any money’. Conrad and Toby returned from Fort William taking the ‘Clachaig variation’, passing Steve and Wendy in Glen Coe conducting the other traditional poor-weather activity, ‘mooching about’.

With the hut left in good order, members were leaving by mid-morning on Tuesday.

Steve and Wendy Richards took advantage of a gap in the weather to drive to Glen Coe and take the Lairig Eilde path to reach Mam Buidhe col then Stob Coire Raineach in high winds with horizontal ice pellets. Their efforts were rewarded with both the summit and the view of a rainbow over Glen Coe on the descent. Later in Crianlarich they had

supper with Toby who had driven east in the hope of better conditions on Ben Lawers but had to bail out in the face of deteriorating weather.

Incidentally, the road down Etive is now dubbed *The Skyfall Road* after its use in filming the eponymous Bond movie. As such it attracts fantasising owners of flashy cars – probably cursing at the poor road surface.



Attendees: Ignacio Corradini (PM), Toby Dickinson (PM), Rebecca King, David Large, Alan Linford, Harvey Lomas, Aaron Oakes, Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Michael Smith, Richard Smith, Tom Spencer, Richard Taylor, Conrad Tetley.

Standing a little east of Capel Curig, by the start of the path up Moel Siabod, the comfortable Gwydyr Mountain Club's Tan-y-Garth hut made a good base for days out on that mountain, the Glyders and Carneddi. The hut's sleeping area and kitchen are spacious, and the place is well organised, though our party of a dozen used all the available dining and parking space.



After a wet mild February, the whole area was waterlogged with the upper reaches of the mountains plastered in fresh snow. A chilling wind swept across Snowdonia.

The Richards arriving early went up the north ridge of 872m Moel Siabod (Shapely Hill) leaving the crest above the snowline for the less boulder slope on the west. Intrigued by an online description of the much more modest 345m Moelwyn tump, Mynydd Cribau (Mountain of Crests), as *'one of the least visited tops in Snowdonia'*, Michael and Helen headed off to investigate. Just 3km as the crow flies from the hut. Their advice is not to bother though as it made a physically demanding outing with tussocks, bogs, unmapped fences, and an overgrown forestry path.

Descending through a shallow gully, they found a ewe stuck in a fir tree. Twisting and turning, its fleece had tangled in the branches' spiny twigs and matted into a tether several centimetres thick. With Helen holding the branch and the ewe trying to flee, Michael's penknife sawed through the tangle.

*Sheep  
rescued  
from tree!*

On Saturday, the Richards and elder Smiths caught the bus to Idwal Cottage and shot straight up Pen yr Ole Wen for a snowy round of the southern Carneddi and a scramble to Pen yr Helgi Du (Hill of the Black Hound), crossed the A5 and back along the old road

The others, starting from the hut, made a circuit of Lyn Cowlyd. First riverside to Cobden's, then the ridge from Crimpiau to Creigau Gleision was traversed before dropping down to the northeastern shore of the lake for lunch. Tim returned along the path along the north side of Lyn Cowlyd, while the rest zig-zagged up an old quarry track onto pathless ground to the snow-dusted ridge up to Pen Lithrig y Wrach (slippery peak of the witch. A long descent crossed boggy ground to reach the A5 to reach Plas Y Brenin for refreshments.

*Towards Crimpiau*



On Sunday, parked in Betwys-y-Coed, Helen and Michael followed a Jubilee Path steeply up through woodland south to Llyn Elsi returning down to the church. Fiona started running the same route but headed much further west along the Sarn Helen Roman Road (flanking Mynydd Cribau) and back also passing Llyn Elsi.





*Steve, Helen Smith and Wendy,  
on Carnedd Dafydd*



Mick, Helen B, Conrad and Andrew decided on an ascent of Moel Siabod from the hut. They skirted the soft snow-covered summit boulder field on its northern flank. For a change, the Plas y Brenin path was taken in descent and the Afon Llugwy followed uneventfully back to Tan-y-Garth.

Parking by Llyn Ogwen, Wendy and Steve and walked past Llyn Idwal onto the northeast ridge of Y Garn via the

Fisherman's Path, using spikes on packed snow above 600m, getting spectacular vistas through gaps in the clouds. In a biting wind they pushed on to traverse around Foel-goch for the east ridge of Elidir Fawr . After lunch they retraced their steps, then took in Carnedd y Filiast and Mynydd Perfedd before a quick descent and ascent onto Foel-goch, where, armed with Tim's insider knowledge, they found the delightful descent path along Y Llymllwyd to then swing south, past 'The Mushroom Garden' and back down. They stayed on for a wet day around Barmouth. Then on the Tuesday tackled Cadair Idris. (MS)

Attendees: Mick Borroff, Helen Brewitt, Alan Clare, Andrew Jarman (PM), Tim Josephy, Harvey Lomas, Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Fiona Smith, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Conrad Tetley.

*Harvey, Helen, Fi, Andrew and Conrad...*

*... after a tiring day*





*Brackenclose looking up  
towards Pikes Crag & Scafell*

Brackenclose, superbly positioned at the top end of Wastwater and on the lower slopes of Scafell, occupies a special place amongst the affections of climbers. It was first FRCC hut, purpose built, and opened in 1936. Electricity was connected in 1977. We had booked it for 2019 but a fire that April destroyed much of the hut. It reopened in June 2022 and this was the first YRC meet in the refurbished hut.

Rod and Yayoi arrived mid-Friday via Hardknott, relishing the fine sight of the locomotive River Mite in full steam at Dalegarth Station. Our pleasure on arriving at the hut was cooled by the low temperature. Lots of attempts were made to light a fire, the issues being damp or non-existent fire-lighting materials. Once going, and with more arrivals, things rapidly began to improve.

The Richards immediately shot up Yewbarrow and were rewarded by this rainbow. Michael came over from Great Langdale via the Band, Bowfell, Esk Pike, Broad Crag, Scafell Pike, Lingmell, Sty Head, and remained dry until he reached Wasdale Head. Helen joined Christine and Jim driving a long route round the Furness peninsula, stopping at Haverigg near Millom for a short walk round Hodbarrow Nature Reserve. They spent time bird watching and examining iron industry ruins.



Saturday dawned dull, overcast, windy and raining. Nobody uncoiled a rope. Michael, Helen, the Richards, Judith, Conrad, Bev, and Solvig, walked up to Sty Head and took the blustery and showery Climbers' Traverse

below Napes Needle to Beck Head. Some continued up Kirk Fell and of those some turned back when the risk of being blown over in a sleety headwind got too great. All descended close to Gable Beck.

The Harrisons walked to Styhead Tarn and back. Toby and Kim, both PMs, ascended Scafell via Green How. The steep ascent was assisted by a strong westerly wind on their backs. Visibility decreased above the cloud base at 600m. The final 250m to the top was a climb through hail and a 40mph wind, neither of which were an incentive to hang about at the summit. A dusting of snow and wind-blown



*Wendy, Steve and Conrad on Kirk Fell*

rime on the rocks gave rise to a cautious descent as the hail was blown into their faces at unpleasant speeds. The descent continued below the cloud over Hard Rigg ridge to gain the path at Burnmoor Tarn for a boggy tramp back to Brackenclose and on to the Wasdale Head Inn, gathering half a dozen members along the way

Richard Josephy went in search of badly needed dry kindling and logs and a replacement tyre for his car, which had punctured on the top of Hardknott the previous day. He then produced a fine supper in his usual calm unflappable way and all gathered round to enjoy an evening of conversation in the by now, very warm hut.



*An evening at leisure under the crags of Scafell: Jim, Christine, Wendy, Richard T, Michael*

Sunday was going to be a much better day. Kim started the day with a dip in the chilly waters of



*No purple prose to describe this (fool) hardy masochism, only purple parts.*

Wastwater just as the sun was rising. After breakfast all assembled to be photographed by Solvig using a hefty movie camera similar to the one used by Captain John Noel to record



*Assembling for Solvig's photograph*

the 1922 Everest attempt. Its weight served to remind us just how hardy these early climbers were.

Ged investigated Lord's Rake, the dangerous fallen block previously wedged across the top of the first rise having cleared itself. He continued across

West Wall Traverse and reported conditions near the top to be sufficiently icy to be very interesting.

Helen and Michael returned to Langdale and their car via the tarns Styhead, Sprinkling, and Angle, resisting refreshment in the Dungeon Ghyll hotels. The views were clear from Blencathra to the Irish Sea and over to Ingleborough.

The Richards headed back up to Sty Head enjoying a drier and much warmer ascent up to the col. After a final steep hot ascent, they were rewarded with far-reaching views across the Lakes from the summit of Great Gable. Taking a direct line towards Kirk Fell led to a minor scree slope epic, crowned with Steve taking a sideways tumble and spending several moments sliding down backwards accompanied by two large menacing boulders! After the safety of the col, they followed 'Michael's traverse' across the northern slopes of Kirk Fell, having summited the mountain the day before. It proved an underused and delightful path, with scenic views opening to the north and down Ennerdale. After crossing the Black Sail track another pleasant path took them to the summit of Pillar and onwards to Black Craggs and Scoat Fell. Reluctant to part from the stunning vistas their final ascent took them onto Red Pike before dropping down to Dore Head and down the western flank of Yewbarrow back to Wastwater and Brackenclose. An excellent day, marred only by a refusal of food at

the Strands Hotel, Nether Wasdale due to not having made a reservation - despite the empty tables and 'good food' billboard outside. By contrast Rod & Yayoi found the Square Café in Broughton excellent, homely, and welcoming: a super place to break the long drive round the outside to and from Wasdale.

In summary the meet was attended by twenty-two people. We extend our congratulations to the FRCC on their hut refurbishment and thank them for its use. (RS)



Attendees: Ged Champion, Solvig Choi (G), Toby Dickinson (PM), Beverley Eastwood, Christine Harrison, Jim Harrison, Richard Josephy, Rebecca King, Harvey Lomas, Steve McCain, Kim Randall (PM), Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Fliss Roberts, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith, Rod Smith, Yayoi Smith, Richard Taylor, Conrad Tetley, Judith Toland-Brown (PM)

After 2009 and 2020 Tafraoute meets, and a 2016 Jebel Sarhro trek, the 2020 Jebel Siroua trek was abandoned as Covid-19 spread across Europe. This meet started in Tafraoute, then resumed the interrupted trek ([p39](#)). The activities near Tafraoute are described here.

Late flights into Agadir necessitated an overnight at a nearby hotel before renting cars for the long drive to Tafraoute over the narrow steep sinuous potholed Kerdous Pass. The usual pause at the col for refreshments was stymied by Ramadan closure. This only made the cold beers at the Hotel Les Amandiers taste better.



On the first day a long drive took everyone to Tanalt to climb the pilgrims' path up 1,405m Adad Medni at the western end of the Anti-Atlas. In dense mountain mist, our convoy got separated on the steep dirt track leaving one car to return to the Tirki river for a walk in sunshine, by pools with swallows, martins and Moutier's redstart for entertainment.

Having clambered up rocks by cascades, they crossed the river, to reach a col, and followed a rough ridge back with a colony of bee-eaters circling and calling above.





*Adad Medni*

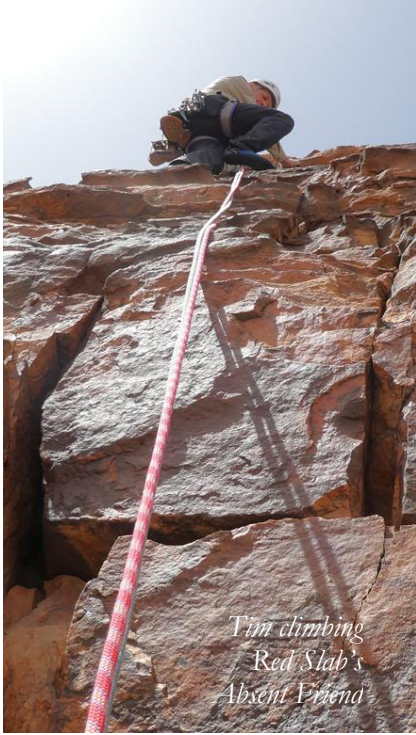


*Richard and Conrad Jebel el Kest*

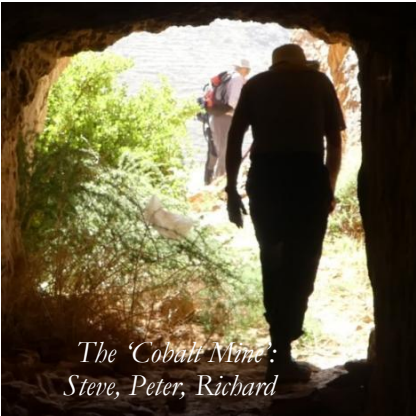
Back on Adad Medni, the rest met a Berber who discouraged an unguided ascent. Despite this, all enjoyed the spectacular ascent up the obvious but exposed Berber path to the saint's tomb on the still misty summit.

The next day, Mick, Tim, Conrad and Richard scrambled up Jebel el Kest by an intricate route from Afantinzar to its north. Their route reached West Ridge but finding the onward gully took a couple of attempts. A grade 2 scramble up this led to a cairned ridge to the 2,375m south summit. Descent by the same route was just made without headtorches.

A party of seven walked to the impressive Elephant's Trunk granite tor. Alan conserved energy shaded by a tree watching the others scramble up the head then over to Tirgult in the Ameln Valley in blazing heat. Better suited to arctic conditions, Peter returned from the col. From Ighaln, the next village to the west, their GPX track indicated a rising traverse crossing steepish slabs divided by gullies. Michael continued this grade 2/3 scrambling almost to the top from where he spotted the more sensible four on the valley track below. After indicating to them that he was okay, realised he was running short of water he roped and scrambled down to the road and hitch back to Tafraoute (80p). Meanwhile, the four below had rejected the idea of hitching back and continued up towards a high sparse pasture. Food, water, and themselves almost exhausted they reached a goatherders' hut, made conversation and were thankfully offered five-litres of water. Onwards out of the back of the pasture, over a col and past Berbers' tents they arrived at the hotel as night fell.



*Tim climbing  
Red Slab's  
Absent Friend*



*The 'Cobalt Mine':  
Steve, Peter, Richard*



Later, Mick and Tim returned to the north side of Jebel el Kest for a pleasant circuit from Tassila passing quartzite cliffs known to climbers as the Golden Cirque, combining it with an easy scramble up 1,992m Afantinzar Peak. They descend along the valley below Adrar Iffran.

On a searingly hot day, Peter, Helen and Michael walked up Jebel Amagdor from Tizgut and after locating the correct tree marking the foot of the guidebook's (not so) "obvious gully". Turning right they scrambled along a ridge and descended through disused almond terraces putting up a pair of Dorcas Gazelles.



That afternoon a party made an appreciation of art visit to the Painted Rocks, driving the scenic route back through the desert via the bumpy "washboard" Aguerd Oudad road.

The penultimate day saw a large party head to prominent 1,961m Tasselt from Tizi Ou Manouze for an easier day with lunch at the top having views across the Western Sahara and Anti-Atlas while butterflies, including swallowtails, circled around. Meanwhile round at Sidi M'Zal, Tim and Michael walked up to Red Slab and after searching a kilometre or so of crag, climbed Absent Friend D\*\*\* 40m in short order and wished it had been much longer.

Two groups ventured out the last full day. One starting from Ida Ougnidif near Kasbah Tizourgane to walk the Berber trail to the village of Tagdicht. They returned along an engineered Berber path for a spectacular descent into the Tagdicht Gorge by an unlikely route down a steep rocky rib and gully. The other set off from the Idekel turn-off to see a 'Cobalt mine' (probably a failed prospective level) then scrambled up onto the Idekel ridge and along it over a couple of towers and, for some, a walk on to nearby 1,778m Adrar Idekel. The way back to their car was along a broad ridge heading northeast.

*Descending one of the Idekel towers:  
Richard, Peter, Steve*



Saturday's journey back via Ait Baha to the the airport to drop off hire cars was broken with a circular walk from Kasbah Tizourgane and scramble to the ruins of the Tamgelochte Fortress (above) and its view across to the Tagdicht Gorge.

Attendees: Mick Borroff, Peter Chadwick, Bev Eastwood, Ian Hawkes, Tim Josephy, Steve McCain, Alan Palmer, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Taylor and Conrad Tetley.



*Mick  
above the  
descent  
into the  
Tagdicht  
gorge*

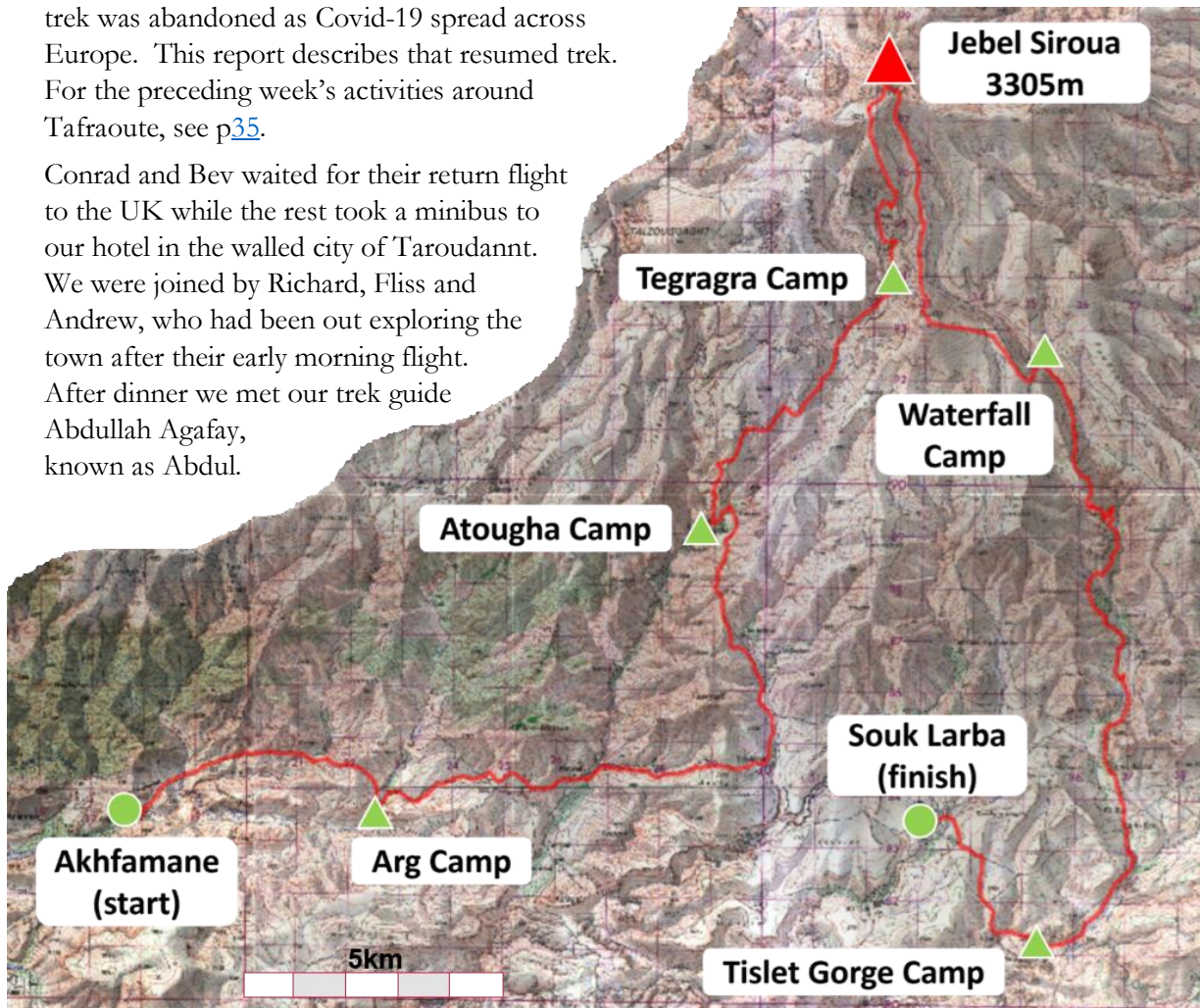


*Ship of the desert road*



After 2009 and 2020 Tafraoute meets, and a 2016 Jebel Sarhro trek, the 2020 Jebel Siroua trek was abandoned as Covid-19 spread across Europe. This report describes that resumed trek. For the preceding week's activities around Tafraoute, see [p35](#).

Conrad and Bev waited for their return flight to the UK while the rest took a minibus to our hotel in the walled city of Taroudannt. We were joined by Richard, Fliss and Andrew, who had been out exploring the town after their early morning flight. After dinner we met our trek guide Abdullah Agafay, known as Abdul.



After Sunday's breakfast, we stowed surplus gear at the hotel and took our minibus, first eastwards, for a break at Taliouine, then north to follow the banks of the Oued Zagmouzene, back into the mountains as far as the village of Akhfamane. There we were united with our trek's cook and eight muleteers. After lunch under the shade of a copse of trees we walked north through a largely barren yet colourful landscape, a sign of the recent years of drought. We soon passed through the village of Arg and found ourselves looking down onto our tents.



Aware there is a new road down the lower Zagmouzene Valley as far as Atougha, we avoided it by crossing the main valley at Mazwad and headed into a broadly parallel side valley. The mules stuck to the original, shorter and lower, route through a couple of small villages where the locals were unused to passing trekkers. Eventually, crossing back into the main valley, we were looking down onto the village of Atougha above its irrigated terraces. We camped on a threshing floor (circled).



Tuesday began with a steep ascent through the village past the ruins of its agadir (granary) and then two abandoned marabouts (burial places or shrines of saints). Along the way, we passed occasional Berbers who made their living in this isolated, elevated place. First, a man riding his donkey to his fields, then a couple of young women chatting above us by their summer home, then a group of men releasing their sheep and goats from their animal pen and leading them out to their feeding grounds.

After lunch at Azib Ouamran, a small summer pasture by a gurgling stream where Peter cooled off by inverting hatfuls of stream water directly over his head, a short walk led us to Tegra, the highest local summer pasture. A French trekking group were camping over a ridge from our site. Michael, clutching a wad of YRC business cards, paid them a visit, and ascertained their plans which were much the same as ours.



Wednesday's ascent of 3,305m Jebel Siroua involved a series of short, steep climbs and traverses across mostly flat, boulder-strewn ground until our arrival at the col under the distinctive volcanic plug. On a clear day, it can be seen from Jebel Toubkal in the High Atlas, far away to the north. Reaching the summit required a ten-minute scramble, across bare rock, with a move along a narrowing ledge needing careful balance to move round a corner.



*Atop Jebel Siroua: left to right Mick, Steve, Andrew, Richard S, Richard T, Michael, Helen, Alan, Tim, Ian, Peter and Abdul*

After dropping to the col and crossing a plateau, the group divided into two. Ian, Steve, Andrew, Richard T and Mick opted first for the summit of 2,905m Jebel Guiliz. From there they found a Berber shepherd sat on a rock, the father of one of our muleteers.

Over a small fierce fire with a blackened teapot, green gunpowder tea and a piece of lump sugar, he made them each a good glass of tea.

The rest of our group, conscious of the time, chose to head straight to Waterfall Camp, following and criss-crossing a stream flowing down through a beautiful, narrow valley, at times flanked by impressive crags and pinnacles. Alan had waxed lyrical for days about the showering opportunities at this camp. Alas, the drought had taken its toll and there was naught but a dribble.

Further downstream the next day, as the valley widened, we saw terraced fields cut into its sides as we approached Tizgui, the highest village on this side of Jebel Siroua. This village was home to Ahmad bin Rhu, one of our muleteers and assistant guide, who invited us into the salon of his house for mint tea and light snacks. Ahmad later produced phials of locally-produced saffron which several members purchased.

Just below the village was a large ancient agadir, possibly twelfth century, built directly into the overhanging gorge wall. By now we were leaving the mountains, and the plains below were coming into sight. In Tagouyamt village we were greeted by friendly villagers, and passing the school, Mick collected an entourage of children trailing behind him until they had to return to their lessons.

We pressed on across open ground to find our camp had been established close to the entrance of the dramatic Tislit Gorge. Less verdant than usual



due to the drought, but still with a palm tree or two, the gorge was lined with the huge rock formations for which it is renowned.

Several village women were soon nearby displaying their brightly coloured carpets and rugs in attractive traditional and modern designs, all homemade on handlooms.

Friday, the last trek day, continued through the gorge, past more carpets and rugs laid out to tempt potential purchasers. Tim succumbed. Through the village of Tislit, we crossed open ground to arrive at Souk Larba, the end of our six-day trek, in time. for one last lunchtime feast in a shady copse. Throughout the trek the food was ample, nutritious, tasty and attractively presented. Our cook, Hussein, had worked at the prestigious Kasbah du Toubkal, Imlil, until his recent retirement.

As is now the norm, the trek ended with a short ceremony of thanks and tipping our support staff: Abdellah Agafay (guide); Hussein Adbel Eid (cook); Lahsin Barhu, Abdellah Idilhaj, Ahmad Ilmalki, Abdellah Barhu, Lehsan Idilhaj, Ahmad bin Rhu, Abderahmane Adra, and Lahsin Idilhaj (muleteers). With that, we were met by our driver, Mohammed, and we were soon on our way back to Dar Tourkia hotel within the walled city of Taroudannt for our last evening meal together.

Attendees: Mick Borroff, Peter Chadwick, Ian Hawkes, Andrew Jarman (PM), Tim Josephy, Steve McCain, Alan Palmer, Fliss Roberts, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith and Richard Taylor.

### Bird Watching Highlights

Bonelli's eagles and, one lunchtime, watching two crested larks busy feeding a fledgling cuckoo much bigger than themselves. There were the usuals: noisy bulbuls, elegant Moussier's redstarts (their national bird), hoopoes, various wheatears, swallows and martins.



### Sources of Information

Moroccan Atlas – the Trekking Guide. Alan Palmer. Trailblazer Guide Books, 2nd ed. 2014. The definitive practical guidebook to treks in the Atlas and Anti-Atlas including Jebel Siroua.

Walks and Scrambles in the Moroccan Anti-Atlas. David Wood. Cicerone Press, 2018. Which describes 40 walking and scrambling routes, with GPX files available.

Morocco Rock – 20 walks in the Anti-Atlas. Don Sargeant. Don Sargeant Graphics 2024. These routes mostly complement those in David Wood's guide. NB No GPX available. The Oxford Alpine Club set of modern 1-25k and 1-50k maps of most of the Anti-Atlas.

Maps of Jebel Siroua region are scarce. Although old, the best is the 100k Taliwine map (No.354), and the 50k Taliwine (No.272) and Sirwa (No 355) maps by the Division de la Carte of the official Moroccan survey in 1977. Try The Map Shop. Online copies may be available from The Souk blog.

Climb-Tafraout.com is a useful online resource for visiting climbers and trekkers.

The meet was held at the village hostel, formerly the old Methodist church. Several members had attended a committee meeting on Thursday at Lowstern. So, on Friday, Mick walked in the Howgills from by the M6, along the Carlin watershed including Uldale Head, Docker Knott, Stowgill Brow, Fell Head and Linghaw. From Yarnbury, the Smiths were on Grassington Moor examining mine workings. Steve and Wendy stopped at Buck Haw Brow Craggs by Giggleswick for their first outdoor climbing of the year. Coincidentally Helen B also spent Friday climbing at Giggleswick North. The beautiful evening weather lured the Richards, Harrison and Smiths for a stroll up to Conistone Pie (below) and some impromptu bouldering.

Mark cycled in via Lowstern (88km, 1,300m ascent, 5<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>hrs) arriving there concerned by a knocking on his bike when coasting downhill. On Friday he cycled from Lowstern to Conistone via Eldroth, Rathmell, Wigglesworth, Long Preston, Hellifield, Otterburn and Linton (49km, 765m ascent, 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>hrs).

Becca served tasty soup and rolls on Friday evening after which a dozen headed off to the Tennant's Arms - some were quiet on their return.

Fortified by Saturday's full English breakfast, everyone set off for a clear, cold day out interrupted by an isolated afternoon squall with hailstones. The attractive Conistone Dib

gorge was included in most rounds. Birding in Grass Wood to Grassington then Linton Falls; Swarth Gill and Coniston Turf Road; the Bycliffe Road to Mossdale Scar; Dib Beck valley past Bastow Wood and up through the ancient field system to Bare House all figured in people's routes. That last by Conrad and Mick who also crossed Green Hill to Gill House to inspect shakeholes with bits of WWII aircraft wreckage before dropping into Kettlewell and returning on the Dales Way and Coniston Pie, almost 27km.

At the Settlements, Arthur had to use his poles to fend off two large dogs trying to nab his chicken sandwiches. The only serious consequence was the loss of his coffee.

Joined by Helen B and Toby, Steve and Wendy pursued Michael and Helen up Mastiles Lane from Kilnsey to cross Kilnsey Moor. They split at the Roman Camp, most to Malham Tarn for the Nature Reserve





boardwalk. Startled by a rat, Helen B sought refuge at the defunct Field Centre. They returned first north then to Littondale, the Falcon Inn, Arncliffe, and Hawkswick. The Smiths went on to Arncliffe Cote then Kettlewell Arncliffe, and Hawkswick. The Smiths went on to Arncliffe Cote then Kettlewell.

Richard's 35km route required stops at villages with shops for supplies but he still took in Kettlewell, Great Whernside, Sandy Gate, Yarnbury, Mossdale and Grassington (for an ice-cream), while testing out transceivers intended use in Bolivia.

Malcolm met his daughter off the Skipton train for a day's walk. Dominique joined us for the evening meal then caught a train back to Leeds.

Mark was back on his bike. This time a Conistone Circular via Littondale, Kettlewell and Grassington (50km, 599m, 3½hrs). Tempted by other cyclists at Halton Gill, he followed them to Pen-y- Ghent Gill returning to Littondale via Dawson Close, riding it all except the steep last drop into Littondale and a few rocky sections. Ominously, near Hawkswick the bike's knocking returned -worse.

A pleasant evening in and, after a tiring day, it was fairly early to bed for most.

The disappointing Sunday weather saw most heading home. Braving the dreary, wet weather, Mick and Conrad drove to Bog Lane near Stirton and walked up to the trig point on Sharp Haw via its rocky south ridge, then on to Rough Haw for more good views, returning via Flasby and Crag Wood.

Mark had no choice but to ride home including the Leeds Liverpool Canal towpath from West Marton to the outskirts of Burney (92.5km, 853m, 6hrs). He discovered the bike's bearings needed replacement after only 4 months use.

Another sociable meet and it was good to see those who for whatever reason hadn't been on a meet for some time. The hostel was comfortable and well equipped although the galley kitchen was tight if more than two people tried to get in at once. There was plenty to do in the area however long or short you wanted your walk or ride. (HJS)

Attendees: Helen Brewitt, Mick Borroff, Michael Crowther, Robert Crowther, Roy Denney, Toby Dickinson (PM), Christine Harrison, Jim Harrison, Becca Humphreys, John Jenkin, Dominique Lynch (Guest, day visitor), Malcolm Lynch, Harvey Lomas (Saturday only), Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Mark Rothwell, Arthur Salmon, Richard Smith, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Conrad Tetley, John Thurston (PM), Carol Whalley, John Whalley.





This meet was surely a first for the Club - a small affair but out of the four attending, three were from the distaff side. It all went very well apart from the one input from the fourth member, a barbecue that failed to stay alight long enough to cook the food.

Helen Brewitt arrived on Thursday evening at the busy but pleasantly uncrowded Beeches Farm campsite. She climbed all Friday with a friend at the nearby Shorn Cliff (left).

Tim arrived mid-afternoon and set off for a 38km circular on his bike, mostly on byways up to St Briavels then down to Tintern before returning very steeply to the campsite. Helen and Fiona Smith arrived late afternoon to share in the barbecue which ended up in a frying pan.

Saturday dawned as gloriously sunny as Friday had been. The Smiths walked from the campsite through woods carpeted with beautiful wild garlic (ramsons) in full flower – the scent was almost overpowering. They initially walked south along Offa's Dyke stopping for Fiona to scramble up the Devil's Pulpit – with its spectacular view of Tintern Abbey below. The legend is that the devil would taunt the monks who were living nearby. Following the Gloucester Way with its attractive view of the Severn

Estuary, they eventually wound back to rejoin Offa's Dyke before branching off on the disused railway line to visit Tintern for a late lunch and ice-cream. The glorious weather had clearly encouraged the crowds, but Helen does not remember from 45 years ago Tintern being quite the honey pot it is today. The climb up to the campsite in the late afternoon heat was taxing.

Helen B and Tim drove to Lancaut and walked down to Wintours Leap where they climbed Central Rib 1 (below), a classic severe Tim last climbed over 25 years ago. The final pitch was climbed by the VS variant, a steep crack made harder by the loss of a few flakes on the crux move. Taking the Easy Way Down to recover the sacks, they found the hot humid weather made the Rising Sun pub more attractive than the prospect of another route.

That evening, another friend of Helen's, Colin, joined us at the campsite and we all went for a pub meal. Next day, sunny again but with the threat of storms later, Helen and Colin returned to Shorn Cliff to climb. The Smiths parked at Brockweir and strolled northwards along the river as far as the bridge at Bigsweir which they crossed. They went steeply up through Cuckoo Wood, and explored Cleddon Falls, before walking back to their starting point via Botany Bay and the Wye Valley Way. It was a beautiful walk, the conditions seemed less humid than Saturday and the trees were not so densely packed, so the greenery was stunning. They trotted the last few kilometres allowing plenty of time for lunch at the village café in Brockweir before heading to Gloucester for Fiona to catch the London train.

Tim made a dent in his journey home before stopping at Coed y Brenin, north of Dolgellau to ride a loop of constructed mountain bike trails and forest roads, arriving back at the car minutes before a thunderstorm broke.

The campsite was great as were the weather, climbing, cycling and walking. And the company of course. (TJ)

Attendees: Helen Brewitt,  
Tim Josephy, Fiona Smith,  
Helen Smith.



*Fiona on the Devil's Pulpit*







*Admiring the view from Sgurr Deas across Lochan Tuath to Sgurr an Fhìdbleir*

Late cancellations saw a smaller party assemble for another stay at the SMC's cottage in Elphin, in rugged Assynt. On the way there, Peter and Jennifer ascended Sail Mhor, their 158<sup>th</sup> Corbett and Mick arrived from Harris and Lewis via Skye then walking around Achnahaird Bay for its views of the Assynt hills.

With a poor forecast, Mick, Peter and Jen dropped a car off at the col at Faire nan Carn and returned to Inchnadamph. They then traversed Glas Bheinn by the six-mile ridge that takes in Beinn na Fhurain and Beinn Uidhe: over two kilometres of quartzite boulder-hopping in decidedly wet, cold and windy conditions. The following day they took the only parking space near the outflow from Loch Lurgainn, donned midge repellent, and walked the pleasant round of the two summits of Beinn an Eoin with views of Stac Pollaidh, all in better weather. Tim and Ged arrived that evening when the midges were swarming.

Tim took his bike out for a 56km ride over Rhidorroch and Loch Diamh from Ullapool, with the trail being decidedly boggy or rough or both in many places. With the exception of Mick, the others tackled Sulven from Inverkirkaig for the quieter, southern approach. The summit was scraping the cloudbase. Peter nipped over to the pointy top, Meall Meadhonach, before they all returned via the Falls of Kirkaig.



*Peter heading to Suilven*

Ged made his first ascent of Stac Pollaidh while Mick took the coastal Postie's Path approach to Ben Mor Coigach from Blughasary, as far as Geodha Mor, where the route disappeared into the stable low cloud enveloping the summit. In the meantime, Peter and Jen had a shorter day on Breabag, completing their Assynt Corbetts. Tim's bike took him from Black Bridge near Loch Glascarnoch, up Strath Rannoch, along Strath Vaich, and over the bealach to Glen Alladale. Descending the rocky track to Alladale Lodge at a gentlemanly pace, he was overtaken by a swarm of small boys hurtling towards their campsite by the Lodge. He returned by his outbound route, 40km.



*Peter and Jen also scrambled Stac Pollaidh's western summit accompanied by photographer Mick*



*Jen and Mick at the summit of Glas Bheinn*

From Lochinver, Tim cycled up the scenic coastal road to Stoer lighthouse, returning much the same way. His attempt to cycle up to the Old Man of Stoer was thwarted by a deep ravine, so the last mile was completed on foot, 45km in total.

That evening, they all drove over to Lochinver for a meal at Peet's Restaurant where they saw the author and backpacker, Chris Townsend.

Low cloud and rain stopped the last full day's play for all except Tim who, while *en route* to Lowstern to break his 550 mile journey home, paused at Blair Atholl to cycle 41km: up Glen Tilt and across wild moors to Allt Scheiathan bothy, then back down Glen Bruar. From Lowstern, he cycled round Ingleborough on tracks to Horton then passing Scar Top and Ged's house. The others made plans for future trips.

After clearing up the hut before departure, in the best weather of the week, Ged and newly arrived Aaron traversed An Teallach. Mick ticked off a Donald, Blair Denon Hill in the Ochils, then headed to Borders for a Sunday in the Cheviots. Peter and Jennifer drove over to the Cairngorms and climbed a Corbett, Corryhabbie Hill, and on to bag a Graham, Cook's Cairn, as a prelude to week's hill bagging in the Cairngorms.



Attendees:  
Mick Borroff,  
Aaron Campion,  
Ged Campion,  
Tim Josephy,  
Jennifer Tennant,  
Peter Tennant.

*Aaron and  
Ged on  
An Teallach's  
Summit*



*Tim, Ged, Peter and Jennifer relaxing at the Naismith Hut*

*Setting off for Beinn an Fhurain above Inchnadampb*



Cool dry weather graced the meet allowing a variety of activities.

Solvig was first to the hut and went straight off to Blea Tarn and Side Pike doing battle with the dense bracken. The other three early arrivers headed straight up to Runestone Quarry (see YRCJ 2003 p89-91) where Michael was inducted into climbing on slate by Aaron and Ged (right). All were gathered around teatime and sat in the late sunshine chatting with a cuppa.

Wednesday was the most active day. John was off to Esthwaite Water fishing where he was glad to have been well belayed when landing a bream which he subsequently returned to freedom. Solvig explored Runestone Quarry then Tilberthwaite and up to Betsy Crag. Back at the hut, she painted in the sun. Andrew and Michael hared off over the Carrs to the Old Man before dropping to Low Water – this was the only busy area. An easy scramble directly up Brim Fell provided entertainment before descending Swirl Howe's Prison Band and the mostly dry, considerable length of the Greenburn Valley. The pools of Greenburn Beck had attracted several wild water swimmers.

Hut warden Alister called in having had no trouble driving in towing a trailer. Nor did Andrew in a Toyota Hilux. Concerns over the state of the LHG track are probably overblown and all that is needed is driving with confidence and care. Nor is parking a problem with the holiday cottages empty.



*Scrambling above Low Water*

Mark arrived late that afternoon having walked over Caton Moor with views of Morecambe Bay. He promptly headed off for an evening's round of Tilberthwaite quarry, over sunny Wetherlam then down the cold shaded Greenburn valley, finding it just as long as the others did. Meanwhile, the other four had strolled over to the Three Shires Inn for a meal, returning for Solvig's cheese and biscuits back at LHG.

Thursday's forecast was for rain later, but this held off while Michael was exploring old tracks east of Betsy Crag. From Grasmere, Mark went up



*Helm Crag from Gibson Knott*

Helm Crag and followed the ridge northwest to Calf Crag, then turned right and circuited above another Greenburn, squelching along towards Steel Fell to descend in earlier than predicted rain.

Solvig was going up Jack's Rake on Pavey Ark enjoying views of Side Pike and identifying some of the trad routes, until the rain hit. At the ODG that evening, she enjoyed a pint and pie while soaking up the atmosphere where the Bradford Lads used to stay.

For those free of weekday commitments, the relative midweek quiet of the fells is to be recommended.

Completed climbs were: Yodelling in the Canyon F4, Runestone Cowboy F5b, Hats Off Direct F6b, Smile at the End of the Rainbow F6a+, Self-Isolation F6, The Burning F6a+, and Belly Button Slab F5c.



Attendees:  
Solvig Choi (PM),  
Andrew Jarman,  
Mark Rothwell,  
Michael Smith,  
John Thurston.

Day visitors:  
Aaron & Ged Campion  
(climbing),  
Alister Renton  
(Hut Warden).

*Solvig filming Pavey Ark  
with her 1950s Bell  
and Howell 70dr camera*

An inauspicious start for this member saw them leaving a sunny 26°C London after work, blindly follow Google Maps for five-and-a-half hours to find 14° drop in temperature, and no road, only a steep grassy track, with huge divots and concrete blocks. Less than two miles from the hostel and yet so far! It was an hour's diversion to get to the hostel via Tregaron. NB: Read the meet instructions.

Others had better starts to the weekend, with Helen and



Michael near Newtown, walking part of the Kerry Ridgeway and Panty Hill on Thursday, and Harvey staying a night at the South Wales Caving Club hut. Tim stopped off at Coed y Brenin near Dolgellau and cycled a newly opened 40km gravel circuit which proved well worth the effort.

Our base for the meet was the Ty'n Cornel hostel. This 19<sup>th</sup> century former farmhouse provided comfortable lodgings for our small party with a friendly warden and a well-equipped kitchen. It claims to be



the “most remote hostel in Wales”. I've not fact-checked this statement but can confirm it was remote, with no phone signal and access via a long, rough track.

Mick designed a 55km long walk for us, potentially splittable into a 40km northern loop and a 21km southern loop. Heading clockwise, it started with 2km of the approach track. Turning right off this was the last time my feet would be dry for the day. ‘Cambrian





*Michael approaching Garn Gron*

Way' said the map but on the ground was just an indistinct ATV track over grassy tussocky, boggy ground. Passing sheep and little else we got to the first top, Esgair Cerrig (490m), soon followed by the high point for the day of Garn Gron (541m).

We passed by the Google Maps highlight of Nant Y Cwr phone box. To give it its due, the pillar box red against the green backdrop of the Welsh hills did make a nice photo before boggy woodland and a descent to the remains of 13<sup>th</sup>C Strata Florida Abbey. No tea room and so it was swiftly passed.

A short road walk and we were onto a well-established track but only briefly. The track followed the Rover Towy and often it was hard to differentiate between the two. The 4WD off-roaders' track was flooded and the detours around the edge were boggy - zero chance of staying dry and twice the water was well over knee level. A boggy (surprise) grass path and more road walking took us to Soar-y-Mynydd Chapel. A beautifully simple

place of worship. Also, the site of my non-existent road discovery the night before, a time when I could have used some calm.

With just 20km left to go there was a fair stretch on forestry tracks and then, in my opinion, the highlight of the walk. The Cambrian Way took a narrow but well defined (and dry) path up the Doethie Valley. The sun was out and the valley looked lush and green with the sound of the river tumbling below. This took us almost the whole way back to the hostel.

The long walk lived up to its name being measured at 56km and 1,500m of elevational. Fiona and Andrew both completed the route on Saturday, in 9½hrs and 14hrs respectively. Michael completed the southern loop with Helen on Friday, and the northern loop on Saturday.



*The water-worn trench which closed the road*





Mick set off from the hostel and followed the Cambrian Way by the infant Afon Doethie downstream. Small heath butterflies, orchids and foxgloves added splashes of colour. He then headed north from the Doethie's confluence with the Afon Pysgotwr Fawr, up the steep hillside at the end of the Pysgotwr Gorge. A good track headed across the moorland to Bryn-ambor farm and the Nant Gwernog plantation where the bridleway was tussocky grass to finally join the outward route and back to the hostel.

Helen and Tim followed the Cambrian Way until about an hour or so short of



Strata Florida before turning back southeast. On reaching the track to the hostel, they followed a quiet lane down to Capel Soar y Mynnydd. They then cut across to drop into the Doethie valley about halfway up before returning to the hostel. About 25km in total.

Harvey cycled the rough track to Tregaron and back for coffee at a caff.

After preparing the evening meal, Stuart made the most of the afternoon by walking to the Chapel and back up Doethie Valley. Returners discovered and destroyed a few unwelcome guests – ticks.

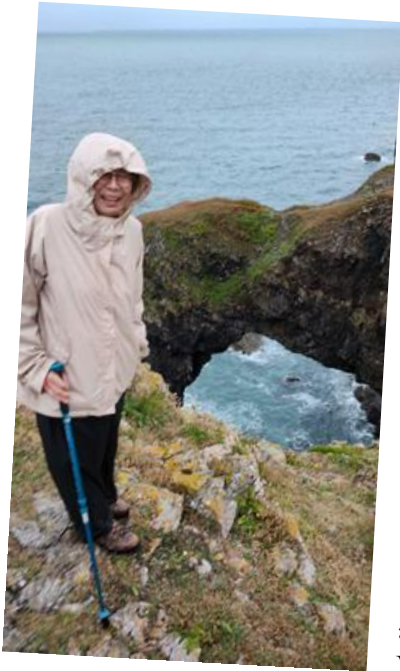
The day was dry and cloudy, perfect for a long walk. There weren't many other walkers around, just six spotted in total. We did though share the route with three old-school Defenders, some larger 4WDs, and a group of friendly men on scrambler bikes.

Sunday dawned wet and midgy prompting most to head home with the three Smiths stopping off at Devil's Bridge and Chirk canal tunnel.

A challenging day's walking in a new area for many of us. (FS)

Attendees: Mick Borroff,  
Stuart Dix,  
Andrew Jarman,  
Tim Josephy,  
Harvey Lomas,  
Fiona Smith,  
Helen Smith,  
Michael Smith.

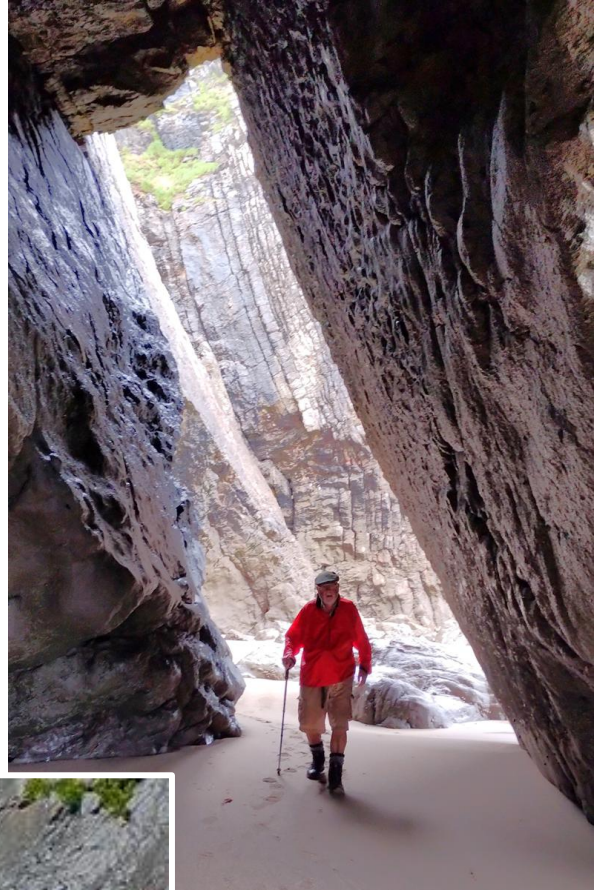




Six members met at the Climbers' Club's May Cottage, some three kilometres southwest of Pembroke Town. Earlier that day, despite dank and drizzly weather, climbers Helen Brewitt and Tim managed a couple of climbs at Saddle Head. After a few days Pembrokeshire coastal walking, Michael and Helen Smith, ticked off the the county top of Pembrokeshire, Craig y Cwm, in the Presceli Mountains. Rod and Yayoi Smith arrived via the Wye Valley, visiting Raglan

Castle, Llandovery, the extensive Welsh National Botanic Gardens, and Tenby for a cliff walk on Caldey island.

The weather forecast for Saturday morning was terrible and, unfortunately, accurate. Everyone walked along cliff tops and saw spectacular cliff



scenery in the vicinity of the Green Bridge, a magnificent limestone arch on the Castlemartin peninsula, before dropping down onto the beach of Bullslaughter Bay to enjoy the relative shelter of natural caves. Their retreat, sodden, back to the hut prompted the rain to

cease mid-afternoon, so the four Smiths then toured Pembroke Castle. Helen Brewitt headed out on her bike. Made of sterner stuff, Tim walked from Bosherton along the coast east to Broad Haven then spent an hour or two walking around the Lily Ponds before returning to the cottage to prepare a tasty vegetarian supper.

On Sunday Michael, the Helens and Tim went to Giltar Slabs. Helen S followed the coast east to the Tenby, explored the pretty town and beach then rejoined the others as they finished their third route as the rising tide was close to splashing their heels. They found the routes “*not challenging, but very pleasant*”. Rod and Yanoi had returned to Oxford.

Helen Brewitt stayed on in her role as Climbers’ Club Hut Secretary to supervise the emptying of the septic tank. She was strongly advised by all present not to succumb to any pleas for help from the operatives. Heading home to Sheffield, Michael and Helen walked across to forested 600m Craig y Llyn, the county top of Glamorgan.

Our small group enjoyed a congenial weekend, despite Saturday’s weather. May Cottage was comfortable and well equipped. Pembroke has much to offer, climbing, scenery, countryside and much of historical interest. (RS)



*Tim, Helen Brewitt, Michael, Rod and Helen Smith at May Cottage*

Attendees:  
Helen Brewitt,  
Tim Josephy,  
Helen Smith,  
Michael Smith,  
Rod Smith,  
Yanoi Smith.



Parc Cenedlaethol  
Arfordir Penfro  
Pembroke Coast  
National Park

# Meet **Mid-week Meet, Grisedale Bridge** Report **Patterdale, Lake District**

13-15  
August  
2024

The comfortable, well-equipped, Cleveland Mountaineering Club's Agnes Spencer Memorial Hut cottage is just off the A592 at Grisedale Bridge. With a bit of juggling, all ten arriving managed to park in the small space available behind the hut.

On Tuesday, the Sheffield party driving in, seeing that rain was forecast further north, spontaneously decided to walk on Bleasdale's Hazelhurst Fell. Their approach to park by the church appeared thwarted by a PRIVATE ROAD sign but a small child playing nearby assured us that it was a public road. Above the moorland heather was starting to show colour. Their car was regained as it started to rain.

That afternoon Tim set off for Place Fell but faced with low cloud and rain, walked the shore path to Sandwick Bay, returning up Boredale, thus circumnavigating the mountain. Steve, Wendy, Kim and Toby explored as far the White Lion bar.

By contrast, Wednesday was warm and sunny. After breakfasting on bacon and egg butties plus the usual staples, Michael, Steve Richards and Alan Hinkes were observed huddled together no doubt hatching a cunning plan - perhaps for a future adventure.

Mick set off eastwards from Patterdale as far as Angle Tarn Beck. Up the valley, like others, he watched a pair of F15 fighters fly past. Cat Crag, Brock Crag and Angle Tarn Pikes led to the long ridge between Bannerdale and Boredale, and down to Garth Heads with its pretty clapper bridge over Boredale Beck. Back over Place Fell he saw more of the RAF's low-level flying before stopping for an ice cream and an ambled back to the cottage.

Tim drove to Matterdale End and cycled the Old Coach Road over to Threlkeld and up Glenderaterra Beck to Skiddaw House which now boasts an honesty cafe. The track deteriorated for the next 7km but remained rideable until improving at the head of Mosedale. The Mosedale community teashop proved to be his undoing. Distracted by chatting to the ladies there it was some miles before he noticed he had left minus his rucksack. His car nearer than the café, he carried on intending to drive back but on arrival at the car he realised the keys were in the sack. His planned 49km route ended up at 70km and the battery was totally exhausted.

Having already spent two days at the Fell & Rock's Salving House in Borrowdale, Kim and Toby spent Wednesday morning exploring the





eastern side of Ullswater before heading across to Thornhow Crag in Grizedale to climb in the afternoon. Their 1969 guidebook's crag notes made route-finding challenging.

Helen, Michael, Christine and prospective member Robert, walked from Hartsop steeply over Hartsop Dodd, to Stoney Cove Pike, Threshwaite Crag, The Beacon, High Street, and Knott with good views. On reaching the Hayeswater outflow, Mike crossed over without incident but the others walked downstream to a footbridge only to find it had been washed away. Robert splashed through the beck, Christine picked her way across some large stones and Helen thought a paddle would be nice. Half way over she threw her boots to the bankside but one sock ended up in the beck. A classic 15k horseshoe with 1000m of ascent

Steve and Wendy tackled Pinnacle Ridge's 3\*, Grade 3 classic scramble on St Sunday Crag, armed with some 'top tips' from Alan Hinkes. They roped up for an exciting ascent. Their descent took them down the north ridge into Glenridding, meeting up with Toby and Kim below Thornhow Crag.



After a quick pit stop at the hut, Kim Wendy, and Christine walked round to Ullswater's shore for a dip, with Helen as photographer. That evening's cuppas, nibbles and a filling meal were followed by a convivial evening with not a little raucous laughter. Robert missed the entertainment as he went home after the walk.

Overnight heavy rain and increasing winds on Thursday morning drove most home. Kim and Toby went to the Inn on the Lake in Glenridding while at Pooley Bridge Steve and Wendy took a short walk beside Ullswater between showers. They ventured down to the end of Haweswater but the rain intensified, so scuttled back to Patterdale before a day in Grasmere on Friday. (WR)

Attendance: Mick Boroff, Toby Dickinson, Christine Harrison, Alan Hinkes, Tim Josephy, Robert Parker (PM), Kim Randall (PM), Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Helen Smith, Michael Smith

The second half of August brings around our customary Introductory Meet held as usual at Lowstern. Those attending, a small but select bunch, assembled on the Friday evening after travelling from various locations with the longest travel award going to Paul Dover and granddaughter Lucy for their ten-plus hour journey on public transport from Cambridge. Three generations of Crowthers headed by Robert with son Michael and granddaughter Grace arrived late afternoon and the Trasler contingent of Lizzie and Matthew along with Dan Curtis arrived later to link up with Martyn who had arrived the previous evening.

Becca, hosting this weekend, greeted all with a hearty homemade carrot-based soup and a warming fire both of which were most welcome.

Saturday started with Becca's customary full Yorkshire breakfast, including black pudding, which set everyone up for the day. We were joined for this by Debbie Kuhlman and Andy Barton who arrived and helped out the day.



We split into two groups for the Saturday. Paul, Lucy (above), Michael and Grace joined Debbie and Becca at the climbing wall in Ingleton. Given the mixed weather forecast, indoor climbing and bouldering was the order of the day for them.

The other group Martyn, Matthew, Lizzie, Dan, Andy and Robert went for a walk from the hut to go over Ingleborough via Norber. Having arrived in Clapham, just as we were about to go through the tunnels leading towards Thwaite Lane the heavens opened and down came a biblical volume of water for the next twenty minutes or so. This settled thereafter and it turned into quite a pleasant walk although some boots did not stand up to the deluge. Having crossed the stile into the fields past the barn, we then headed over to the Norber Erratics and across to the large cairn on the Pennine Bridleway. From there we headed for Nick Pot and the path along the side of Simon Fell up onto Ingleborough. There a brief lunch stop was taken. Good views were not the order of the day.



*Martyn and Andy. Crummackdale behind.*

*A Silurian greynacke sandstone erratic*



The descent passed Gaping Gill and through Trow Gill past the cave entrance, later taking the path up to Clapdale to avoid the increased £2.50 charge to walk through the estate.

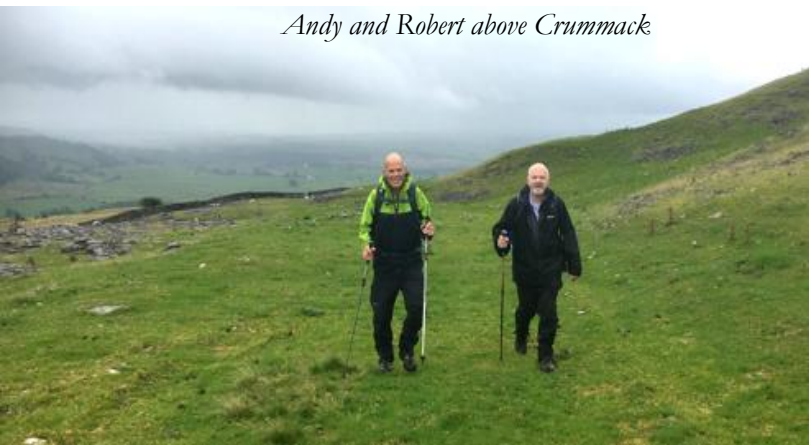
A couple of beers were taken at the Lakehouse, the old manor house in Clapham, before returning to Lowstern and Becca's "We're having a barbeque" despite the weather conditions.

Sunday brought more unsettled weather. After breakfast Grace got her wish to go to the climbing wall once more with Michael and Robert, assisted by Becca.

The others, except Lucy, visited Skipton castle and took in a bit of history.

In the evening Becca provided a chilli con carne before the usual amiable, wide-ranging conversations in the comfort of a warming fire. (MT)

*Andy and Robert above Crummack*



Attendees: Andy Barton (PM)\*, Grace Crowther (JPM), Michael Crowther, Robert Crowther, Daniel Curtis (PM), Lucy Dover-Sarakun (JPM), Paul Dover, Becca Humphreys, Debbie Kuhlman\*, Lizzie Trasler (PM), Martyn Trasler, Matthew Trasler (PM).  
[\* Day visitors]

The Mountain Club of Stafford's Bryn Hafod hut (circled below) lies at the head of Cwm Cywarch under the Aran ridge. It is an attractive destination for those looking for less populated and reasonably challenging hill walking with the possibility of rock climbing. So just right for a joint meet with the Wayfarers' Club. The Friday conversation included tales of RAF jets completing their "Mach loops" of the hills and valleys around Machynlleth.

Predictably, most parties chose to spend the bright and blustery Saturday on the Aran ridge. The main part of the ridge, roughly a third of the whole, runs from Glasgwm in the SSW to the summit of Aran Fawddy in the NNE. They accessed the ridge at various points and their routes went in both directions.

From the summit Aran Fawddy (below) looking north, the rocky ridge continues invitingly, but the abysmal drop off to the east and down to the dark blue water of Creiglyn Dyfi was a spectacular view. The fair weather afforded long views of Shropshire in the east and towards Snowdon in the north. Cadair Idris and the Rhinogs were silhouetted impressively directly to the west with the Cambrian hills visible to the south.

Alan Clare enjoyed a day in the Cwm Cywarch valley with a diversion up the Cwm Terwyn before taking in the cafes and hostelryes of Dinas Mawddwy.

The climbers, Mike and Maddy were frustrated in their plans on





Friday to climb Acheron because of difficulties in the approach and the first pitch too wet and retreated.

Then with Steve on Saturday, pushed through to Will-o'-the-Wisp, found the first pitch as described but not the second. Mike managed a VS to the left of an overhang onto the next stance, but the remainder of the route was vegetated and uninviting. They again retreated and headed for the Aran Fawddwy path which would have made a better approach to the climb.

After the evening meal the usual wide-ranging convivial discussion kept everyone entertained. At dusk, bats swooped around the hut and scratched in the eves into the night and early morning.

Unfortunately, overnight the weather had deteriorated to overcast and dreary, and most members determined to head straight for home after breakfast.

For some members however, the weekend was only the part of their plans. On the way on, Solvig and Mike had stopped off to tick off Moel Famau, the county top of Flintshire and the highest in the Clwydian range.

After the meet, Solvig stayed at the Climbers Club hut Ynys Ettws. In Sunday poor weather practiced gear placement at a climbing wall. Then on the Monday, climbed multi-pitch Flying Buttress on Dinas Cromlech. On Tuesday she moved on to Rhoscolyn for cliff climbing. She then drove over to the Pen y Gwryd for two days on the Snowdon Horseshoe and Tryfan's East Face.

Alan Kay drove on down to camp in the quiet, attractive, and hilly area near Machynlleth. During the following three days he walked 34km with 1,250m ascent along Glyndwr's Way to just beyond Llanbrynmair. He enjoyed some of the best Welsh weather he'd seen: brilliant and warm.

(SC)



*Cairn above Ddrws Bach*

Attendees: YRC:  
 Solvig Choi, Alan Clare,  
 Stuart Dix,  
 Beverley Eastwood,  
 Alan Kay, Anne Latham,  
 Pete Latham,  
 Michael Smith,  
 Conrad Tetley.  
 Wayfarers' Club:  
 Mike Hammil,  
 Maddy Raven,  
 Peter Baker, Carol Baker,  
 Steve Crossley.



*Conrad and Stuart approaching Pillar. Base Brown, Green Gable, Great Gable, Kirk Fell behind*

Ennerdale is one of the Lake District's remoter spots with the advantage of the Lower Gillerthwaite Field Centre being well up the valley, with easier access to the higher peaks.

Perhaps the greatest challenge of the weekend was getting there. Two miles short of the Centre, those arriving in the dark found the track gated and padlocked. Lacking both keycode and phone signal they were lucky that someone drove up who knew the code.

A decent forecast brought some out on Thursday. Stuart walked up Haystacks to wild camp high on Fleetwith Pike. Helen and Michael walked north round sunny St Bees Head.

On Friday Mark was also drawn to the coast, Sunderland point near Morecambe, and Stuart walked to Black Sail Youth Hostel and back. Michael and Helen walked the windy ridge from Red Pike to Haystacks.

As usual, Saturday was the day for longer outings. Mark and Richard climbed four pitch West Wall (VD) on Pillar rock's west face expecting a relatively easy day – it was not. What with a long slog up with heavy sacks, cold rock, and route-finding difficulties, they were glad the route wasn't too technical. Stringing together a couple of pitches, they topped out on Low Man and scrambled up Old West (M) to High Man. They managed the supposedly tricky descent in two obvious abseils. A walk up Pillar along the ridge above Black Crag, over Little Scoat Fell to Steeple and a descent by via Steeple's North ridge completed their day.



*Black Sail Hostel*

From Black Sail, Conrad and Stuart contoured under Boat How Craggs to Beck Head, over windy Kirk Fell down through Kirk Fell Craggs finding it tricky in places, then over Pillar. Before they started the High Level Traverse they met Felicity, Helen and Michael who had come up from Robinson's Cairn in the lee of Pillar. Conrad and Stuart

found the Traverse exposed in places. Being close up to the cliffs and monumental bulk of Pillar can be intimidating. Their ascent of the Shamrock Traverse up the Rock was slippery in places but an exciting way to the summit before descending the easier west slope to Ennerdale Water, with lighter winds and grand views making a pleasant end to the day. Felicity, Michael and Helen had meanwhile called at Black Sail Hostel for a coffee and caught up with John and Carol on their way back to the Centre from that Hostel.

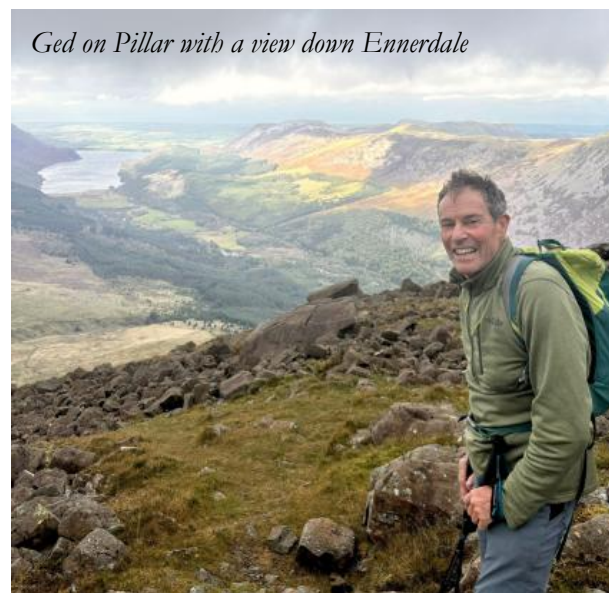
Cyclists Tim and Harvey independently roamed the forestry tracks, Harvey on an unsuccessful shopping trip down the valley for a bottle of wine. Tim cycling up to Black Sail Hostel then walking up to Looking Stead and towards Pillar. He turned back not far from the summit as he judged the wind blasts to be too severe for a lone pensioner. Retrieving his bike he rode the difficult single track south of the lake. After coffee in Ennerdale Bridge he returned to the hostel by the well-constructed Coast to Coast path.

Ged and Imogen joined the meet on Saturday evening in time for Rory's tasty meal and on Sunday they both headed to Pillar. Michael, Helen and Felicity made a short round of Bowness Knott with good views of Ennerdale. Tim frightened himself on the Whinlatter Forest mountain bike routes. Others walked sections of the Red Pike to Haystacks ridge.

The Field Centre was rather idiosyncratic, huge and sprawling, with the enthusiastic owners having plans for further development. With a farmyard menagerie of dogs, cats, hens, geese, and ducks there was plenty going on. Weeven met their rescued hedgehogs one evening. The dining room including all the crockery and cutlery was up narrow stairs from the kitchen which consequently provided extra exercise for our cook, servers and those washing up. After the meal, a wood-burning stove kept the sitting area cosy which encouraged the usual relaxed chat.

(HS)

Attendees: Ged Campion, Imogen Campion, Stuart Dix, Tim Josephy, Harvey Lomas, Rory Newman, Felicity Roberts, Mark Rothwell, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith, Conrad Tetley, Carol Whalley, John Whalley.



*Ged on Pillar with a view down Ennerdale*



Stoney Middleton lies between the deeply incised White Peak valleys and wide-open moors of the Dark Peak offering climbers near endless climbs on both limestone and grit. All around are culturally significant locations including Eyam, Chatsworth, scores of Stone, Bronze and Iron Age sites, and old lead mines. Plenty to keep the dozen of us at the venerable Derbyshire Pennine Club's compact hut busy on this weekend of decent autumn weather.

On arrival, Mark Rothwell walked in low cloud, west of Stoney Middleton through Coombs Dale to a flooded old quarry (not the picturesque lake he was hoping for), and back via Eyam only to find himself still locked out of the DPC hut. Meanwhile, Tim's 28km ebike circuit over the moors to the west culminating in an exhilarating narrow descent into Eyam village with dim flat lighting resulting in some surprising dips and bumps.

On Saturday, the two of them climbed six of the long routes on the slab area in Horseshoe Quarry where rope length was an issue on some routes for which 70m ropes were recommended. Their highlight was the two pitch Men at Work (5). Further amusement came from a slackliner 25 to 40m above the quarry floor.

Conrad was still slowly recovering from his knee injury, so he and Beverley explored the lower reaches of the vast Chatsworth estate from Baslow.

The others headed first over the high route to Eyam then north to a Bronze Age 'ring cairn' barrow which once held an urn. Reaching their next site, another Bronze Age one well away from any decent path, involved crossing a blocked off stone gateway, Here the Traslers and Dan headed off to take a longer, more sensible route to Leadmill. The remainder yomped across the moor to the barrow, Wet Withens sunken stone circle and chair stone.



*Mark on  
Men at Work*



*Stuart, Dan, Martyn, Helen and Lizzie inspect an Eyam Plague Stone*



On reaching Leadmill via Hoghall they were surprised to find the Traslers already there having a coffee break. Here, Tom headed off to Hathersage. The return south was beside the swollen Derwent with occasional sightings of dippers. A final pull up from Froggatt village to Riley and the seven Hancock family graves, plague victims who died in a single week. A pleasant 20km tour.

President Elect, Ged Campion, joined us for the Beverley's sausage and mash meal on Saturday evening.

Discussion topics afterwards were as diverse as ever: rereadings of Northanger Abbey; when we'd like DNR posted over our hospital bed; covid and the plague; bunk-bed ladder design; and the value of Blyton's and Rowling's oeuvres.

Stuart made a solo Sunday round of Higger Tor, Carl Wark hill fort and Burbage Edge from the northern end under blue skies. Mark Rothwell patrolled Froggatt Edge in search of Tom, unsuccessfully. He did though help a young climber balanced on a ledge by providing the correct cam to protect the upper half of bold Brown's Eliminate (E2 5b). A good deed done.

Tim's ebike tour past Curbar, Topley Moor, bone-jarring descent of Houndkirk Lane to Ringinglow for a pint of Guinness Zero at the Norfolk Arms. Then surfaced roads up to Redmires, gravel along Stanage Edge to High Neb, down Burbage, the Longshaw Estate, Grindleford and the hut.

From the hut, Michael and Helen walked through Curbar to the Wellington monument,

and Big Moor (no deer in sight) to White Edge, dropping to another Bronze Age stone circle before finding Mark below Froggatt. Their return to Stoney by Stoke Brook finished off this good meet in the Peak as the sky clouded over. (TJ)

Attendees: Dan Curtis (PM)\*, Stuart Dix, Beverley Eastwood, Tim Josephy, Mark Rothwell, Helen Smith\*, Michael Smith\*, Tom Spencer, Conrad Tetley, Mark Longmore (PM), Lizzie Trasler\* (PM), Martyn Trasler.

[\*Arrived early Saturday]



*Ged, Mark Longmore, Stuart, and Tom*

A spell of calmer, drier weather than is usual for the time of year almost lasted long enough to include this meet, the largest gathering in the Club's calendar. It was also the closing meet of Becca Humphrey's presidency and perhaps it was no coincidence that the Club's official guests at the dinner were all female: international cave explorer and Principal Guest Fleur Loveridge; Wayfarer Carol Baker; and Chris Paul of the Fell and Rock Climbers' Club. Once again, the dinner was held the Falcon Mannor Hotel where thirty stayed and close enough to our Lowstern clubhouse for eighteen to stay there.



*Mick Borroff  
packing at the  
Falcon Manor Hotel  
after the Sunday walk*

As usual several members and guests stayed at Lowstern on Friday, two having walked a round south of Coniston Cold including part of the Pennine Way. Crummackdale and Trow Gill were two of the areas walked on Saturday morning. So far all pretty typical. So, much of what follows describes the exceptional.

Arriving from Cambridge at 1am one member realised he had not brought his DJ. Later that morning he was in the Sense charity shop in Settle picking up a £6 new DJ, £1.50 bow tie, and a new £3 Brook Taverner shirt. The black shoes bought elsewhere were more expensive, £7. Like a true Yorkshireman, he was rightly pleased with his bargain.

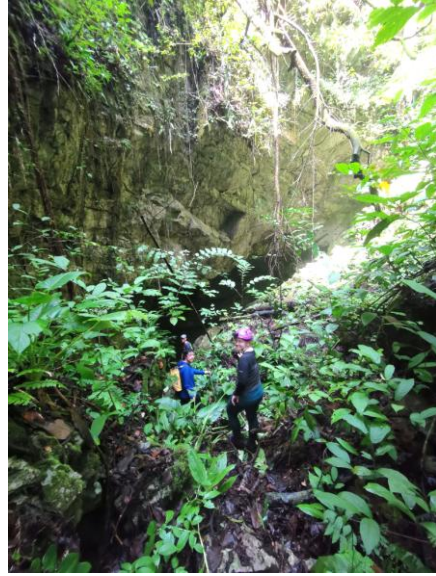
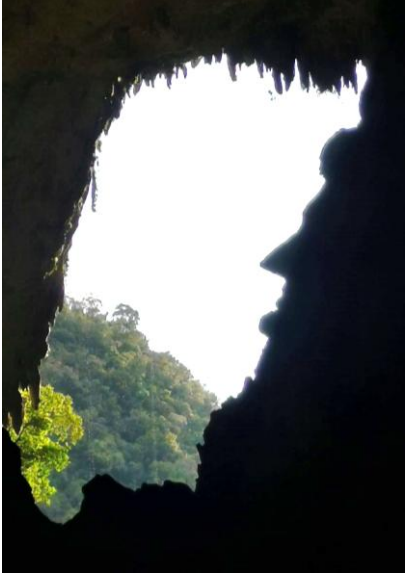
More seriously, walking along a street in Ingleton at the same time, our President was attacked by a rottweiler dog which clamped its teeth on her forearm. She was taken to Kendal Urgent Care Unit for treatment including stitches and a couple of days later her bruising looked horrific. Thankfully no nerves or blood vessels were seriously damaged.

Becca and her chauffeur, Debby Kuhlmann, did not make it back from the hospital in time for the AGM, held again in the spacious Settle Social Club function room. The business of the meeting was despatched smoothly and briskly with Vice President Conrad chairing. Tim Josephy was awarded Honorary Membership with mention of his long service in

various capacities: President, Meets Secretary, regular caterer on Welsh, Cornish and Dinner Meets, and more prosaically often the last person to leave any meet accommodation as he's giving the place a thorough sweep and mopping before locking up.



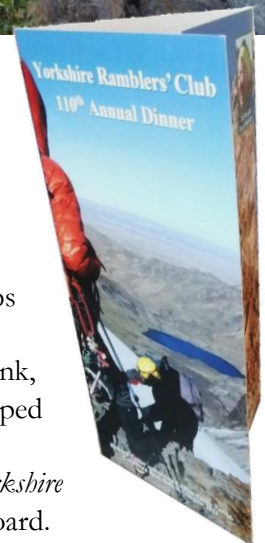
*Bandaged Becca and Fleur at the Dinner*



There were over three dozen members at the AGM. Another twenty sent apologies. Among the latter was Andy Eavis who had the good excuse of being out caving in Mulu but sent a couple of pictures to make us envious with the message *“The entrance is a pristine new cave, attractive and nearly half a kilometre long. We are probably going to call it Perou Cave.”* Mark Rothwell had a similar excuse as he was climbing in the Anti Atlas.

Professor Fleur Loveridge of the Leeds University, who gave the lecture after the AGM, specialises in engineering geology, with a particular interest in groundwater. She has followed that interest, and indeed lots of ground water, a long way underground, through exploratory caving in Austria, Tasmania, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, and, more recently, 7km of new cave in the northern Dales. Her talk concentrated on repeated visits with teams of cavers to explore the Ario complex of potholes which have a resurgence in the Picos de Europa’s Cares Gorge, between 1997 and 2017. While there were some tight sections, the most impressive pictures were of long multiple-hanging abseils down wide shafts 300 to 500m deep.

Despite a cold wind, it was dry for the 6pm tramp south through Settle to the Falcon Manor Hotel where 64 met for the dinner: 45 Members (thankfully including our now sewn-up President), three



Prospective Members, and 17 guests. Master of Ceremonies David Large steered us through the usual Grace, toasts to the King, Absent Friends, Kindred Clubs & Guests and The Yorkshire Ramblers’ before Conrad, Frank, David, Arthur, and Jason stepped up to form the choir and led everyone in the singing of *Yorkshire* with Helen Smith at the keyboard.



This night was probably the first time an ex-president had been shooed away from a post-dinner discussion where childbirth experiences were being passed on to the next generation. Our GP



*From the left: Toby, Wendy, Kim, Fiona, and Steve*

member hearing of this thought he probably had more experience than those mothers combined, admittedly secondhand. Plus, he had once rescued a two-year-old from drowning in a birthing pool when parents and midwife were busy and hadn't noticed the child had fallen in and was underwater.

It was past 1am before the last few made their way from the Devil's table, up to their rooms by which time the outside temperature was falling markedly.

The Sunday Walk differed slightly from the usual format being John Sutcliffe's guided geological walk explaining features of the karst terrain immediately south of the Mid-Craven fault east of Settle. Lambert and Stockdale Lanes took everyone up to Attermire Crag and Victoria Cave, returning via Clay Pits Plantation into Settle.



*From the left: Kim, Toby, Conrad Tetley, Beverley, David Large, Geraldine Lally, Richard Taylor, Steve, Wendy, John Sutcliffe and Mick Borroff*



Above Stockdale Lane, John conjured from his rucksack rock and ore samples to illustrate his talk. Shortly after that stop, lunch was taken in the shelter of Victoria Cave as the afternoon drizzle set in. However, the heavier rain held off until we finished the route.

Arthur Salmon, Barbara, and Conrad followed part of that route a little later. Philip and Paul Dover walked a triangle taking in Stockdale Lane and Attermire Scar. Back in Settle, they chanced on Ann and Anne Dover in the cycle shop café, later joined by Richard to make the full complement of Dovers.

As dusk fell, 18 finished off the weekend at Lowstern with a chat over a cream tea with Wendy's homemade scones. Then all that was left was to tidy up and drive home.

Attendees: Club Guest Carol Baker (Wayfarers, PM), Peter Baker (PM), Andy Barton (PM), Mick Borroff, Aaron Champion, Beverley Champion (G), President Elect Ged Champion, Imogen Champion, Robert Crowther, Toby Dickinson, Ann Dover (G), Anne Dover (G), Paul Dover, Phil Dover, Richard Dover, Tony Dunford, Beverley Eastwood, Iain Gilmour, Sarah Gilmour (G), David Handley, David Hick, Alan Hinkes OBE, President Becca Humphreys, Jason Humphreys, Suki Humphreys, Andrew Jarman, John Jenkin, Tim Josephy, Debby Kuhlmann, Geraldine Lally (G), David Large, Alan Linford, Angela Linford (G), Harvey Lomas, Principal Guest Fleur Loveridge (G), Malcolm Lynch, Duncan Mackay, Nicole Mainaud (G), Christine Marriott, John Middleton, Valerie Middleton (G), Conrad Murphy (G), Rory Newman, Andrew Paul (FRCC, G), Club Guest Chris Paul (FRCC), Shaun Penny, Kim Randall, Alister Renton, Jane Renton (G), Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Felicity Roberts, Arthur Salmon, Barbara Salmon, Fiona Smith, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Smith, John Sutcliffe, Peter Talling (G), Richard Taylor, Conrad Tetley, Martyn Trasler, Charlie Wilkinson (G), Frank Wilkinson.



*Ged addressing the Sunday gathering for scones and tea at Lowstern*



Voice from the Kitchen: *“Alan! You’ll be going into Settle, won’t you, would you mind picking up a couple of things for tomorrow’s meal?”*

Harvey: *“Course not. What do you need?”*

Voice from the Kitchen: *“Just fennel seeds and a bottle of white wine vinegar.”*

On the face of it mid-December is not a propitious time of the year for an outdoor recreation meet: short days, often cold overcast wet weather, and everyone busy with other seasonal demands. But this meet is one of the most popular gatherings each year. In recent decades it has often been an opportunity for some social caving, and for those members now less active to meet up with old friends, catch up with what’s happening and chat to some of the newer

members. Taking on the catering for a meet which includes a Christmas dinner for 33 is an organisational challenge. It was clear from the above overheard conversation that Yayoi and Rod Smith were not simply ripping open catering packs. We were in for a feast.

Early arrivers were out on Friday in cool and cloudy conditions. Though the Dales tops were clear with no rain, over in the Lake District hills it was apparent that they were not faring so well. This was confirmed by Solvig who had tried climbing there.

Michael and Helen warmed up ascending Gregareth from Yordas Cave, splashed north over Green Hill to gain just one metre and reach the highest point in Lancashire. This is a bit of a comedown for Lancastrians since before boundary changes that point was the Old Man of Coniston. A right turn from the col and along the Occupation Road took them across Kingsdale to head straight up Whernside. During a short break for a snack there, they saw nobody, a rare occurrence on a Three Peaks summit. Indeed, they only saw two people all day. South along the ridge and they could drop almost directly back to their car.

Others walked into Crummackdale returning past Norber, or up towards Trow Gill.

Friday evening saw many more arrivals. Maps and guidebooks were out planning for next summer’s meet in the Alps. There were a couple of departures outside to camp for a quieter night. They needed a good flysheet as there was overnight rain both nights.

Saturday dawned colder with wreaths of cloud drifting up the valleys and around the felltops. First off were Andrew, Helen and Michael, heading over fields towards Ingleton to traverse Ingleborough from Crina Bottom to Trow Gill. They had not gone 400m when they saw three deer bounding away. A little later they disturbed large flocks of lapwing impressively flashing black and white as they rose. The trio took a lunch break by

the summit shelter walls but did not linger on account of the freezing wind and wetting cloud. This was Andrew's first meet for well over a decade. A knee problem had recently kept him off the fells, but he was pleased with its performance today.

Those conditions deterred other groups who headed instead for Crummackdale. Mick, Robert, Conrad and Beverley took John Sutcliffe's geological tour along Thwaite Lane and below Robin Proctor's Scar to the Norber Erratics to view the unconformity between the Carboniferous limestone and the Silurian basement rocks at Nappa Scars brought to the surface by the North Craven Fault. They returned via the Wash Dub, and The Gamecock. Roy and Mike motored to Hawes to visit old haunts and reminisce. The biting cold and damp eventually called a halt to that, and they headed back via Ribbleshead. In search of a warming coffee, they tried Horton, Helwith Bridge and Stainforth without success until reaching The Courtyard to purchase exotic cheeses. They met up with several other members taking refuge in the Gamecock and later moved on to the New Inn. Not far away, Iain, David, and Christine arriving in the afternoon walked the estate lanes above Clapham.



*John Sutcliffe pointing out the unconformity at Nappa Scar with Robert and Beverley*

Back at Lowstern, most members moved upstairs making space to set out tables for the meal. Up in the long dorm they heard from five of the summer's Bolivian party as photos and video clips were screened. Then Mick gave more detail on his Ubaye valley visit. All returned downstairs to rooms heavy with promisingly rich cooking aromas. Every chair and bench in the building and a small side table or two were needed to seat everyone.

Ged, as President, welcomed us all, the meal was then served, and a small mountain of food disappeared accompanied by wines and hearty conversation.

After the meal, for the first time since Ged sat down, silence fell as Harvey took up his guitar and gave us three folk songs. Those unaware of his talents in this field were suitably impressed. Each song received warm applause. Tables were cleared and conversation continued long into the night.

Sunday's weather was milder but distinctly wetting, this did not discourage Ged's planned Long Churn caving party consisting of Conrad, Tim, John Sutcliffe, Michael, Robert, and caving novice, Solvig.

### ***Christmas Dinner Menu***

*Creamy sweetcorn soup*  
\*\*\*

*Smoked salmon & prawns with  
horseradish cream and  
lime vinaigrette salad*  
\*\*\*

*Roast loin of pork, crackling, rosemary  
roast potatoes, carrots, peas, apple  
sauce, sage stuffing, with herb gravy*  
\*\*\*

*Christmas pudding with brandy sauce*  
\*\*\*

*Wensleydale cheese, biscuits and Port*

The water level was up but not as high as your scribe had managed before. After a short splash up from the lower entrance the dry route through Baptistry Crawl and the Font took us to Double Shuffle and Plank pools, each giving someone a thorough wetting. Undaunted, it was down the Slot to the top of Dollytubs for a glimpse of daylight and, for Ged, Solvig and Michael, the Cheesepress. Heading back upstream, John steadily tackled every obstacle with perfect technique against a rising flow. Joining that flow close to where it was heading off into Diccan, some opted for the dry oxbow bypass. The others continued upstream against the increased flow in which Solvig wasn't a match for the force of the current, which managed to rip off both her wellies during successive attempts to push her through the torrent of white water. Her wellies, one brushing Tim's leg as he brought up the rear, were lost to posterity. After taking a breath and reassessing possibilities, Solvig made good use of her remaining socks on the rocks to climb over the flow. In a push-me pull-you pantomime scene reminiscent of the Chuckle Brothers, Conrad pushed her over the gushing rapids, where she landed face-first into the water at the top, and Ged pulled her out. Even after such a comic introduction to caving and underground wild swimming, Solvig still looks forward to more social caving escapades. She is grateful to have been loaned a caving suit, especially when told that some have lost their trousers to the current.

(MS, SC)

A snack back at the cottage, a clean round, and 2024's meets were at an end.

Attendees: Carol Baker, Peter Baker, Mick Borroff, Ged Champion, Solvig Choi (Sunday caving), Alan Clare, Robert Crowther, Roy Denney, Toby Dickinson, Andrew Duxbury, Beverley Eastwood, Iain Gilmour, Mike Godden, David Hick, Tim Josephy, Anne Latham, Pete Latham, Adam Linford, Alan Linford, Harvey Lomas, Christine Marriott, Kim Randall, Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Rod Smith, Yayoi Smith, John Sutcliffe, Richard Taylor, Conrad Tetley, Carol Whalley, John Whalley.



*About to enter  
Long Churn:  
Solvig, John,  
Ged, Michael  
and Robert*



*Tim on the Double Shuffle*



## Low Hall Garth – 5-7 July 2024

Besides the general cleaning tasks, several specific jobs were completed. Alister used his electrical skills replacing the living room light with greener LED fittings. Simon replaced the shower extractor fan after cleaning the pipe and removing the outer restriction. A small hole in the adjacent toilet wall was repaired by John Jenkin. He also fitted a replacement pane of glass into the kitchen window as Yasmin was cleaning the slate porch. The washroom looked much better after Carol repainted the end wall and bleached the shower curtain.

Across the track, Robert and Michael mixed concrete to build up the side of the barn fireplace. Simon used the left-over cement mixed with slate to ease the drop from the concrete road surface down

onto the eroded gravel. Hopefully, fewer cars will get front vallances scraped there now.

Becca, with Yasmin's help, prepared a vegetable curry for the evening meal. She later installed the new OS map of the Lake District by hanging it on the wall. Decent weather helped everyone, especially John Whalley with his gardening work. (SR)

Attendees: Solvig Choi (PM), Michael Crowther, Robert Crowther, Becca Humphreys, John Jenkin, Simon Raine, Yasmin Raine, Alister Renton, John Thurston, Carol Whalley, John Whalley.





Not on the meet but a month earlier, Alistair returned Herbert's bench after restoration and preservation. Andrew Jarman helped lift it back in position. A week earlier, Richard Sealey turned some triple bunks into doubles so they are now easier to get in and out of. Ged Campion delivered a large teapot for the refreshment of large parties.



### Lowstern – 2-4 August 2024

An early start was made on Friday by those already at Lowstern after the previous night's Committee meeting. Michael removed cobwebs and their residents, Wendy and Helen cleaned the many windows, Steve worked on the tree stump by the outdoor benches used as an occasional table, and Rory had already removing debris from the gutters.

Carol's re-painting work on the driveway gates was not helped by John Sutcliffe driving in and knocking over her paint pot. Harvey cleaned moss from the roof.

Richard Sealey directed and supervised all the work and a great deal of the planned general maintenance was completed. Beyond that, in preparation for the intended large-scale work on the washrooms, drying and sluice room, the log-store was emptied, dismantled and removed.

The cottage was left in a good condition. There was discussion of the potential problems

posed by the bats who have taken to roosting above the patio doors. (MS)

Attendees: Robert Crowther, Beverley Eastwood, Zara Eastwood (G), Becca Humphreys, Harvey Lomas, Robert Parker (PM), Steve Richards, Wendy Richards, Helen Smith, Michael Smith, Richard Sealey, John Sutcliffe, Conrad Tetley, Carol Whalley, John Whalley.



# Fountain Fell's Curtain Pot Survey

Stewart Muir &  
Ged Campion

The publication of this survey completes the record of the YRC's exploration and development of Curtain Pot on Fountains Fell. This system drains towards the Fountains Fell master cave which resurges at Brants Gill Head, near Horton in Ribblesdale providing an impressive distance from sink to resurgence. Ged Campion and Frank Walker set the context for and describe that exploration in YRCJ 2020, pp196-210. Those accounts cited include the reaction to Harry Hesketh's fatal fall.

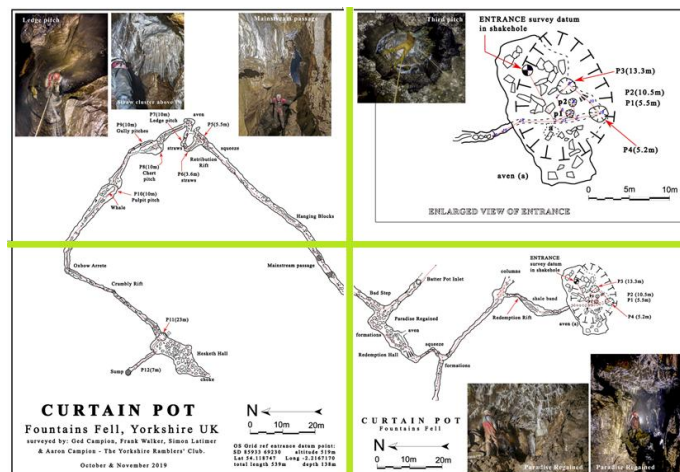
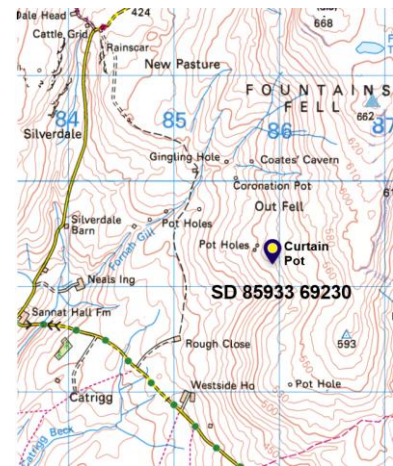
This exploration started in 2018 in an unexceptional shakehole 40 years after YRC member, Gordon Batty and Frank Walker (NPC) descended the 5m entrance pitch to find a tight rift above a wet pitch. To avoid a soaking from the stream cascading down this shaft, a plastic sheet was draped behind the electron ladder to keep the team as dry as possible, hence the name Curtain Pot. Despite noticing a draught at the foot of the pitch the site was thought not worthy of further effort.

How wrong they were. By enlarging a low bedding passage this century, the top of a promising aven was discovered. Many months of further exploration followed revealing an impressive mainstream passage, countless formations and 12 vertical pitches leading to an impassable sump depth of 138 metres. Curtain Pot offers challenge and interest and is one of the most impressive caving trips in the Yorkshire Dales. The work of the three developing the cave was shrouded in secrecy, who whilst still exploring, were concerned that the immensity of their discovery would attract cavers from other clubs to pirate the system.

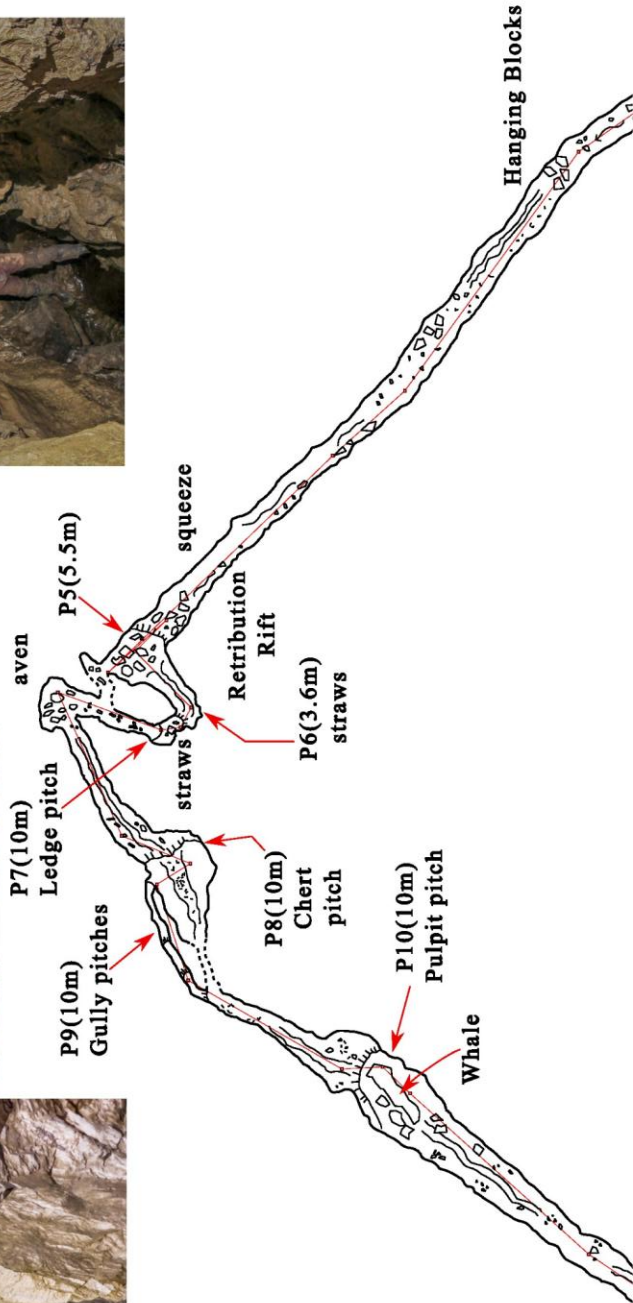
During October and November, 2019, under the auspices of the YRC, survey data was collected by Ged Campion, Frank Walker, Simon Latimer and Aaron Campion.

We are indebted to Stewart Muir for preparing the survey for this journal and redrafting it in digital from Ged's original drawing. We also thank Clive Westlake and John Dale who were invited to photograph sections of the cave.

To fit a survey drafted at size A1 in this small format journal, Stewart has arranged the images, labels, scales and information around the survey into quadrants with their edges intersecting the survey at points where no significant details might be obscured. The quadrants are printed on the next four pages.

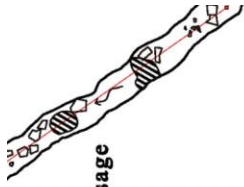


Available from [tinyurl.com/YRCCurtainPot](https://tinyurl.com/YRCCurtainPot)

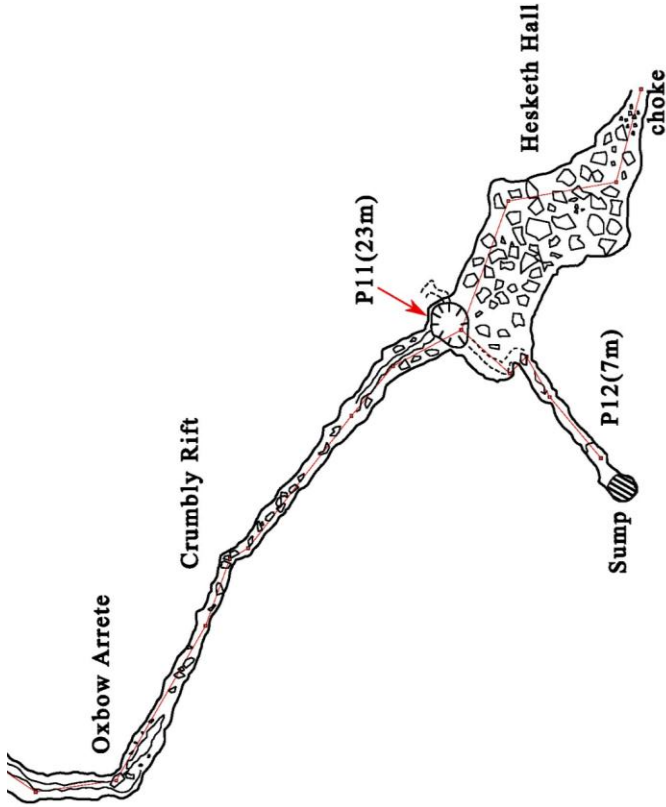


A higher resolution copy of the survey file is available at [tinyurl.com/YRCCurtainPot](https://tinyurl.com/YRCCurtainPot)





Mainstream passage



# CURTAIN POT

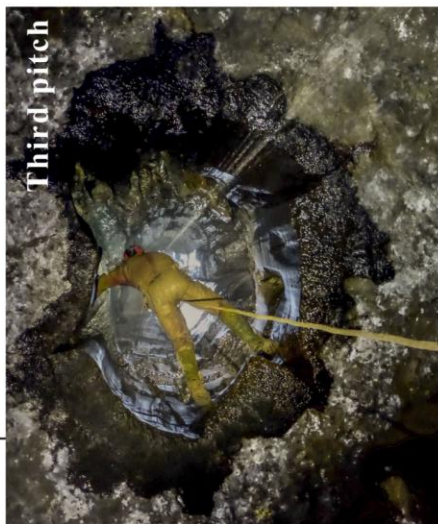
## Fountains Fell, Yorkshire UK

surveyed by: Ged Campion, Frank Walker, Simon Latimer  
& Aaron Campion - The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club.

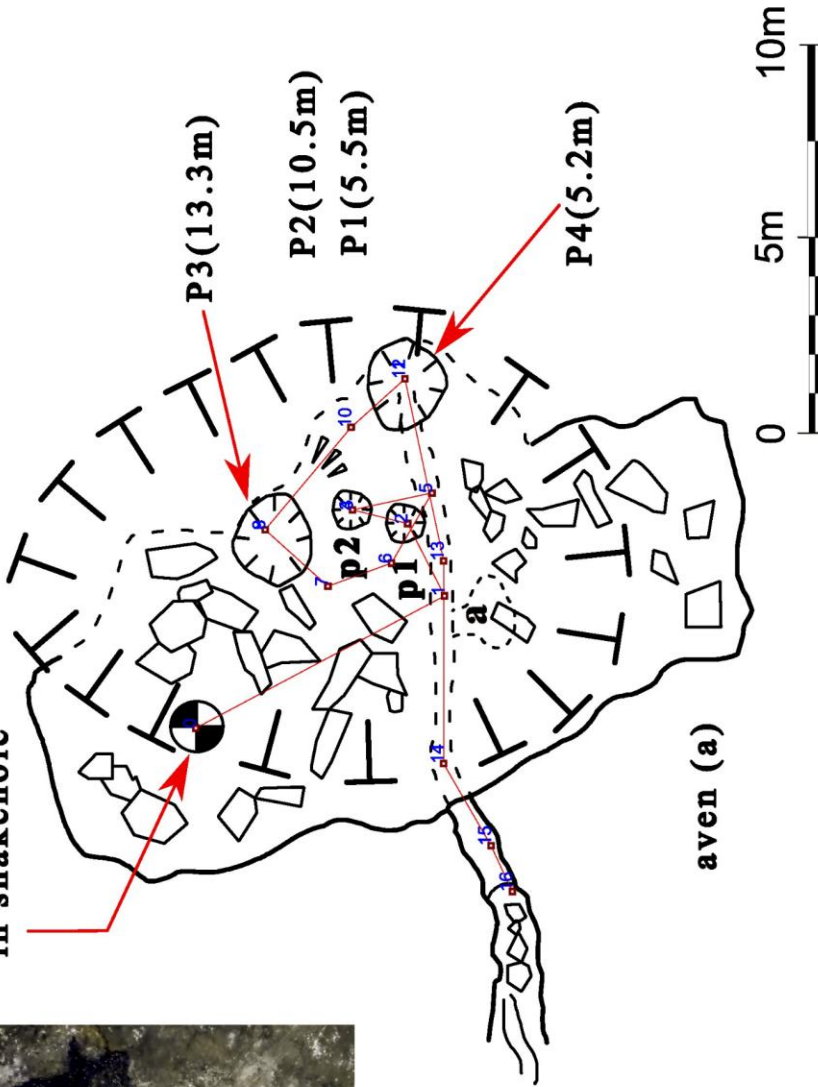
October & November 2019



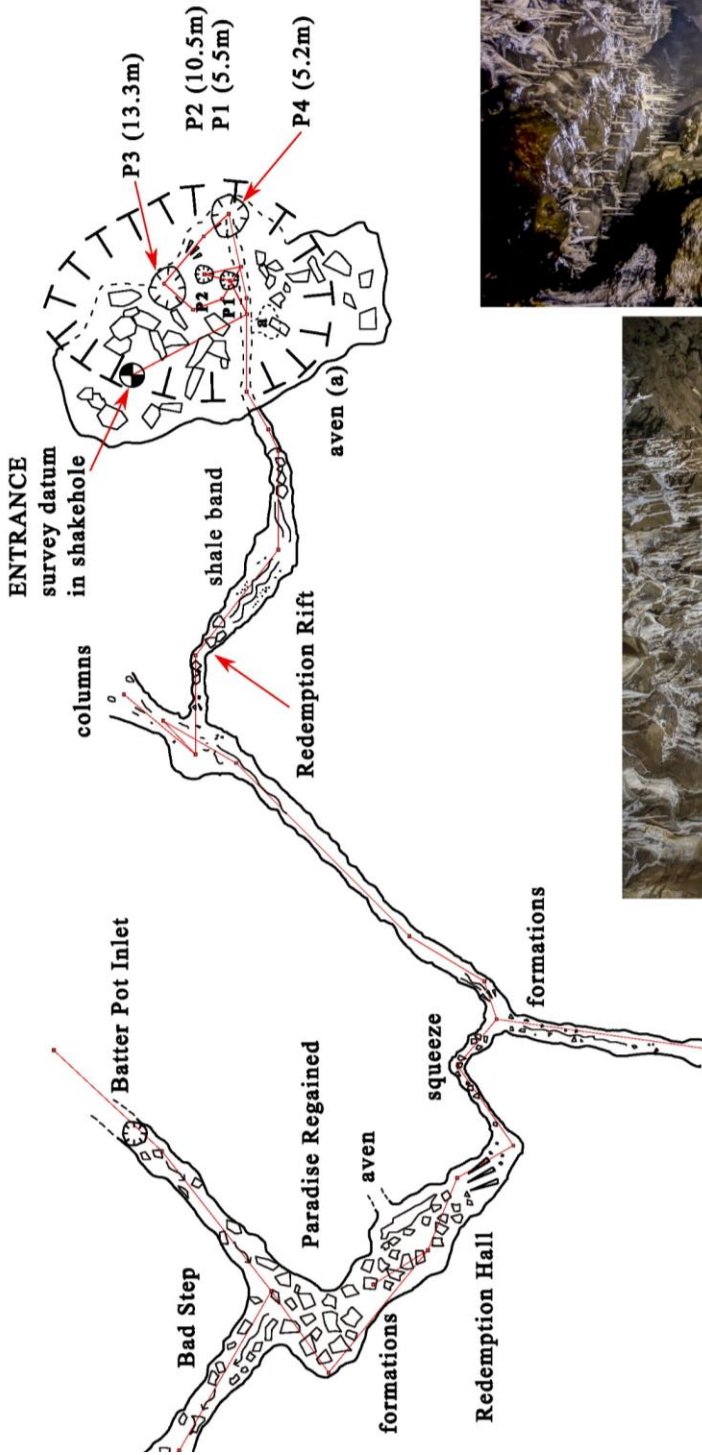
OS Grid ref entrance datum point:  
SD 85933 69230 altitude 519m  
Lat 54.118747 Long -2.2167170  
total length 539m depth 138m



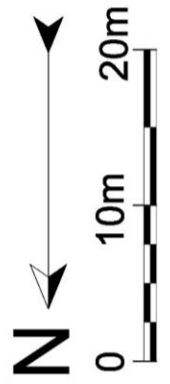
**ENTRANCE survey datum  
in shakehole**



**ENLARGED VIEW OF ENTRANCE**



**CURTAIN POT**  
Fountains Fell



# Ice and Fire – Iceland’s Laugavegur Trail

Conrad  
Tetley

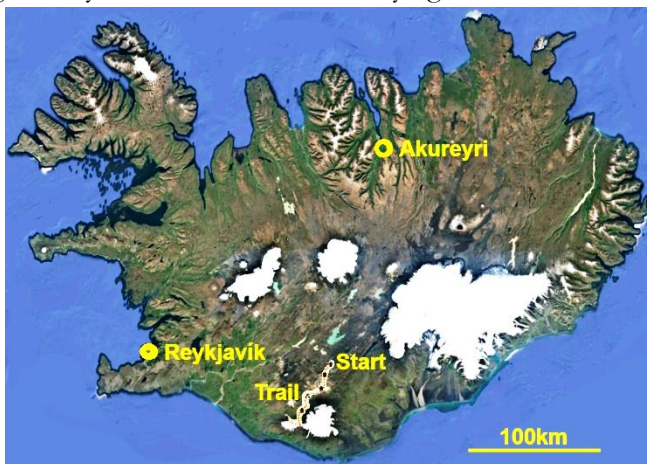
The Laugavegur Trail takes you into the volcanic heartland of Iceland and is often described as one of the finest walks in Europe if not the world. Inspired by Andrew McCluggage’s guidebook, Conrad, Bev and a geography-teaching friend Pete, embarked on it for a 52km four-day self-supported north to south trek. The trek is provisioned with huts en-route if a hut to hut option is preferred.

The trek starts at Landmannalauger campsite, surrounded by a myriad of colourful rhyolite mountains and hills. Best observed by climbing 943m Mt. Blahnukur (right), the impressive moss-covered Laugahraun lava fields soon come into view, set against a backdrop of steaming fumaroles and intermittent patches of ice.



The first day is 12km steadily uphill taking you through the Brennsteinsalda lava field, to the Hrafninnusker huts and campsite at 1022m. This was the coldest day of our trek, reaching  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$  at night and we woke up to hailstones and ice. Whilst basic, all the hut and campsites sell a small selection of items, but as with any monopoly, a premium price has to be paid.

Day two provides hut or camping options, either overnighing at the beautiful lake of Alftavatn or walking another 3km, extending the day’s hike to 15.1km and staying at the ethereal Hvangil campsite in a horseshoe of mountains. The views on approaching Alftavatn are sublime, a mixture of mountains, lakes and the impressive Myrkdalsjökull Glacier to the west. The Alftavatn restaurant serves only soup for lunch and vegetarian chilli con carne for dinner. This day is the first encounter with river crossings. We crossed the first, Bratthalskvist, using stepping stones but did change footwear to wade the second, wider and deeper, Torfakvist river.



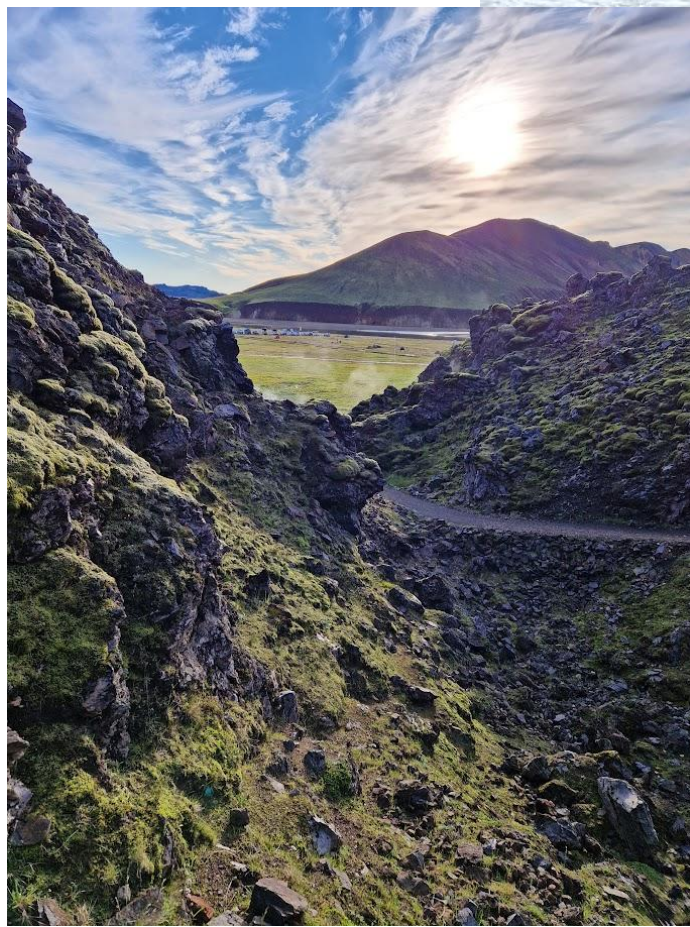
If days one and two were a vista of mountains and lakes, day three takes you across the lava desert (as Pete pointed out technically not a desert as it receives more than 250mm of rain per year) to the Ermstrur/Botnar campsite. This 12.2km section starts with a river crossing and then onto an enormous lava field with various features along the way including basalt columns and the unmistakable 200m deep Markarfljotsgljúfur Canyon, formed by the Myrsdalsjokull Glacier melting 2000 years ago as a result of the volcano Katia erupting. The rock formation of the canyon is a rainbow of hues and colours.

Starting from that campsite, day four ends at Thorsmork. The final day of the Laugavegur Trail

*Landmannlauger*



*Bev on ice*



combines elements of the previous days' experiences in terms of crossing rivers, walking over lava fields and finally descending through woodland to the campsite. For the final camp we decided to stay at the slightly more upmarket Volcano Trails campsite where everything from a sauna to good quality food was on hand.

Overall the Laugavegur Trail was fantastic experience made much easier by Iceland's well organised public and private buses and its people's welcoming hospitality.



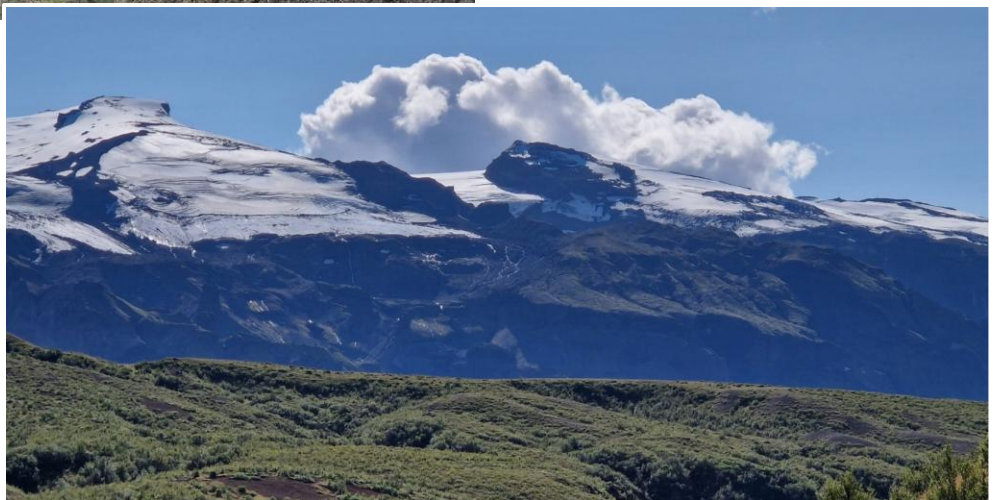
One of many fumaroles seen beside the trail

There were several eruptions this year on the Rekjanes Peninsula



Icelandic ponies at Laugavegur

Cumulus cloud forming over Eyjafjallajökull



# A Long Chimney

Imogen  
Campion



## The juxtaposition between triumph and nausea

It was a great day with great company in freezing temperatures. The icy torture on our extremities was practically a spa treatment, numbing the fingers and toes to the point where the pain felt like a distant memory during the struggles up the infamous gritstone chimneys.

It was my first time at Almscliff and Long Chimney was one of my first ever trad leads which

felt like the definition of baptism by fire.

The experience was so exhilarating that I had to stop half way to throw up which I believe was induced by a medley of fear, pain, borderline hypothermia and an overdose on fun. Ever the responsible adventurer, I graciously warned my belayer below but thankfully held back the impending expulsion and reached the top without puking, my belayer's relief mirrored my triumph.

Footnote: First ascent of Long Chimney was by the YRC's Herbert Ingle and George Dent in 1893. They gave it VD, it now gets HVD.



# A Jotunheimen Traverse

Kjetil Tveranger

**An inter-club trip, 150 years after Cecil Slingsby's first mountaineering visit to Norway**

Members Michael Smith, Helen Smith, and Kjetil Tveranger were joined by his wife, Ann-Karin, their giant schnauser Niko, last year's Dinner guest, Nils Hagen, the FRCC's Steve Charles, and CC's Lewis Preston (ages 68 to 79) to traverse the Jotunheim from Bygdin to Årdal finishing with a celebratory meal as guests of the Slingsby Foundation in Årdalstangen. From Oslo, buses to Fagerness then Beitostolen saw all gathered at the Tverangers' cabin. A day was taken to provision and re-pack gear, before wandering around the local fells.



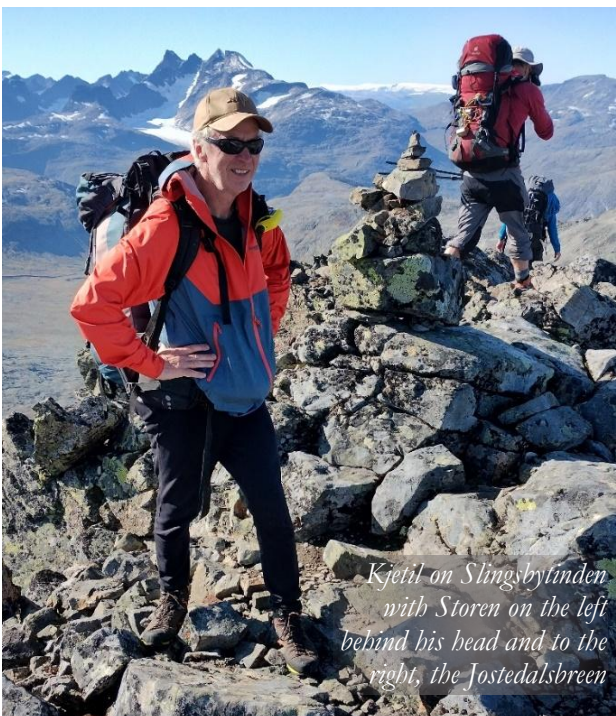
The days to Torfinnsbu and Fongsbu were straightforward enlivened by a couple of interesting river crossings, swollen after recent rains. A poor forecast meant we took a second day at Fongsbu walking on nearby mountains.

While three took Niko by a 22km boulder-strewn valley route round to Skogadalsboen arriving at 7pm, four went onto the Uranosbreen, turning left to reach the col below Uranostinden's north ridge. That ridge was climbed to the narrow 2,157m summit, the

group then returning and continuing north to 2,028m Slingsbytinden across an equally rough broad rocky ridge with stunning views over to the Hurrungane. Slingsby climbed peaks including Storen there in 1876. A crag-avoiding zig-zag descent north left a 5km valley walk to the hut arriving there at 9pm.

The high path above Utladalen was taken to Vettismorki. The next morning, we spent a few hours helping replace the turf roof there. The rain saved us watering it in. We visited both ends of Vettifossen on the way down.

After a night at the historic Vetti Gard farm, Erling Eggum of the Slingsby Foundation treated us to a celebratory meal at the Klingenberg Hotel.



*Kjetil on Slingsbytinden with Storen on the left behind his head and to the right, the Jostedalsbreen*



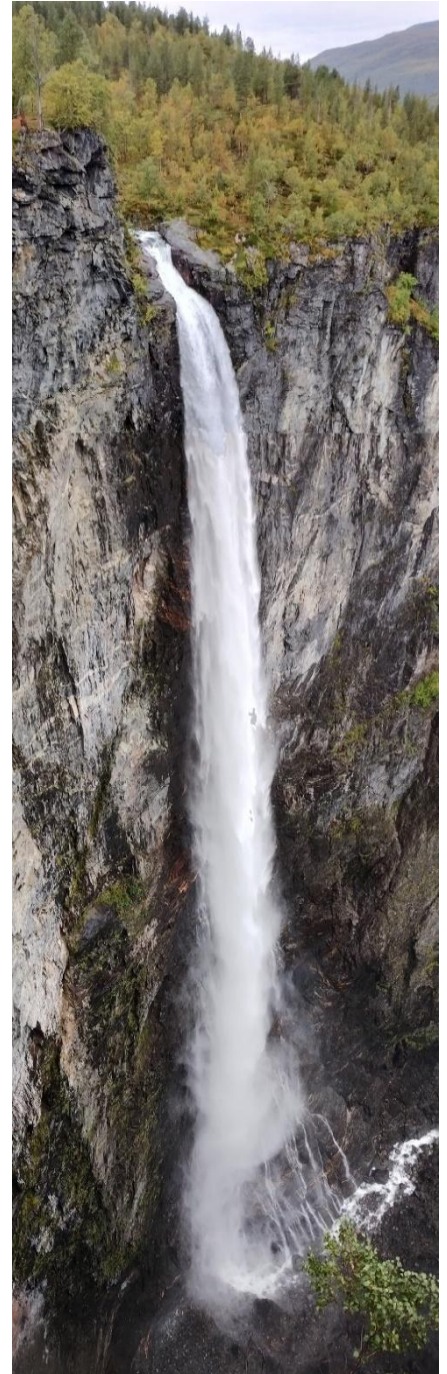


*On the Uranosbreen with Uranostinden on the left, and Kjetil leading*



*Michael and Kjetil with Uranostinden behind*

*A tea break for the roof turfing party, Helen left, Kjetil right*



*Vettisfossen (above) in Utladalen has a free fall of 275m. In 2016 it was voted the most beautiful of Norway's many waterfalls. Despite the steep path to the top, it is a popular tourist attraction. Vettismorki is above it and Vetti Gard is roughly level with its foot.*

# Climbing in Thakek, Laos

Imogen  
Campion



Green Climbers Home (left) in Thakek, Laos, is the top spot for sport climbing in the country and the only place truly developed for the sport. If you're after pristine limestone crags, a community of like-minded adventurers, and the ease of climbing practically from your doorstep, this is the ideal destination.

*"a month ...  
in a four-bed  
dorm, not for  
the faint  
hearted"*

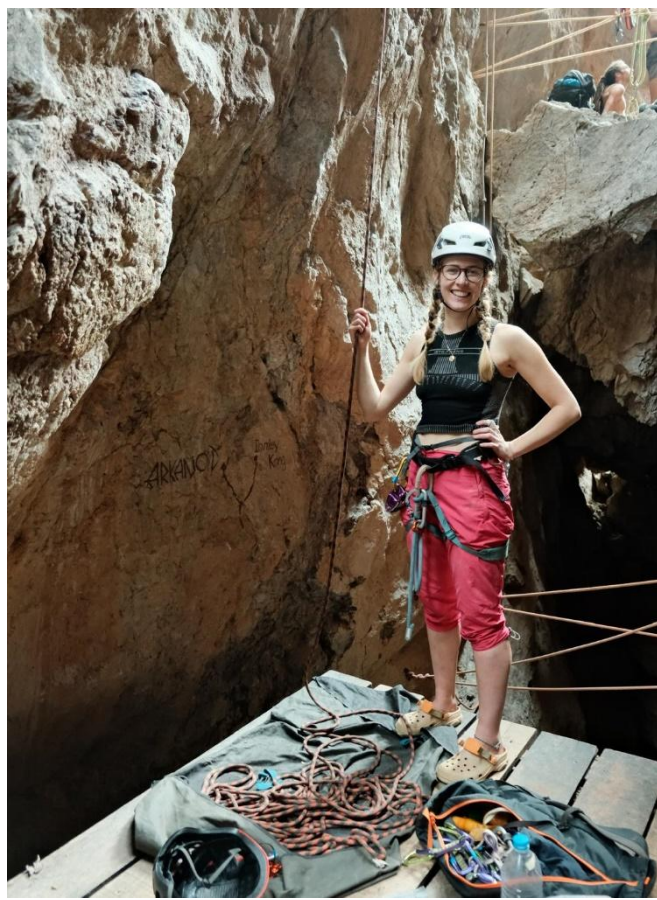
I set off from Manchester in February, hauling a 60m rope, 16

*"renting gear  
was the norm  
here... I  
could have  
saved myself a  
lot of trouble"*

quickdraws, and the kitchen sink on my back. After a brief stop in Bangkok, a flight to Nakhon Phanom in northern Thailand, and a bus across the Mekong Delta, I finally arrived at Green Climbers Home, where I'd booked a month-long stay in a four-bed dorm, not for the faint hearted.

By my first morning, I learned that renting gear was the norm here, and I could have saved myself a lot of (back) trouble. However, I quickly found climbing partners and dived into the stunning climbs

*Imogen on Thunder Thighs, 6c, sector S&M, and on the shaky wooden platform*



Laos has to offer. Two main areas stole the show: ‘The Roof,’ featuring steep 90° routes on natural monkey bars, where even the easiest route at 6b+ required crawling through a narrow tube-like feature; and ‘The Canyon,’ which involved a descent into a canyon onto a shaky wooden platform with routes scaling up past a dubious looking bus-sized boulder overhead.



*Imogen on Allez les Bleus, 6b*



There are hundreds of well-maintained routes across all grades on pristine rock, along with a locally developed climbing guide that supports ongoing development and the limitless potential for new routes.

*“limitless potential for new routes”*

The climbs and the camaraderie were unforgettable, making Laos a worthy addition to Southeast Asia’s legendary climbing spots.

*To Bobby, 6C,  
on the Roof*

# Ubaye Valley and NW Mercantour, France

Mick  
Borroff

Thoroughly deserving its accolade “*The Pearl of the Southern Alps*” the 80km-long Ubaye valley in France is loosely sandwiched between the better known Ecrins massif to the north and the Alpes Maritime to the south, neighbouring the Queyras and Mercantour Natural Parks. I previously visited on a snowshoe trip (YRCJ 2011;13(11):28) and returned for three-weeks in September based in Barcelonnette with Jennifer and Peter Tennant.



The configuration of the Ubaye side valleys and their bounding ridges give ready access to five passes useful for mountain ascents: Col de Vars, de Larche, de la Bonette, de la Cayolle, and d'Allos (closed during our visit). In addition, the narrow and sinuous roads to

the higher hamlets, which occasionally give some ‘interesting’ driving, also provide reasonably high starting points for ascents to the summits and high-altitude lakes.

There are more than 140 mountains within an hour’s drive, topped by the Aiguille de Chambeyron (3,412 m), with some routes crossing into Italy. Maljasset, the last hamlet at the head of the Ubaye valley is particularly attractive: unspoilt and situated in a wild undeveloped landscape offering numerous interesting routes.



September was a good time to go, with mostly good weather and being after the French holidays, the hills were quiet and parking was not a problem. Sport and trad climbing are plentiful and there are four via ferrata routes at Meyronnes. It would make a great venue for a future club meet. We made the best use of our time and only having a couple of wet days, were able to do eighteen days on the hill covering some 250km and 17,300 m ascent. The following notes on our principal mountain routes give a taste of what we encountered:

**Tête de Paneyron and Pic de Serenne from Col de Vars** The high starting point helped with acclimatisation on our first outing. We met a shepherd and his four *patou* (protection dogs) guarding a substantial *troupeau* of sheep. Good views.

**Chapeau de Gendarme 2,682 m from Super Sauze** Iconic Ubaye peak and the Pain de Sucre dominate Barcelonnette’s southern skyline. We traversed using the normal route up the ridgeline to the summit, then descended much steeper and cable-protected west ridge into the forest and crossed *marnes* to complete the circuit.

**Tête Dure (2,629 m) from Larche** This easy route initially followed a battlefield path with WWI remains and the summit gave good view of the peaks along the border ridge.

**Grande Sèolane (2,909 m) from Les Agneliers** Another classic, this shapely mountain has a vertiginous peak and rocky slopes that give it a Dolomitic air. We traversed it by the Lou Chiminet, an easy scramble, and crossed the vast expanse of slabby bare rock and scree to the summit and down the west ridge.

*Jen and Mick in the Lou Chiminet*



**Pointe d'Escreins (3038m) from Les Houerts** After a steep ascent from the valley, we passed close by a large herd of bouquetins (ibex) who weren't at all put out by our proximity. We returned via the hanging valley containing Lacs Bleu and Vert.

**Lac de Neuf Couleurs and Tête de la Frema (3151m) from Fouillouse** This deservedly popular circuit ascends to the Refuge du Chambeyron and on to the heart-shaped lake, then climbs to the Col de la Gypiere and up to the **Tête** on the border ridge.

**Cols de Mary and Marinnet and Aiguille Large (2857m) from Maljasset** A classic outing to the high cols on Italian border returning via the Marinnet lakes fed by the most southerly glacier (rock covered). Peter couldn't resist including the shapely needle of Aiguille Large.

**Sentier Horizontal de Costebelle from Les Sanières** In the Dolomites, this would be called a sentiero attrezzato and was a long exposed traversing path with a protected section across a steep ravine. This had been recently re-routed due to two major landslips - something different on the north side of the Ubaye valley and good views.

**Petite Sèolane (2854m) from Laverq** Few tackle the very steep and mostly pathless 900m ascent from the valley and therefore miss out on the interesting two kilometres east ridge that we did to complete a traverse descending by the normal route.

**L'Aupillon (2916m) from La Pinatelle** My knee was feeling the strain of the previous day's exertions so I just did a shorter walk from the gite while Peter and Jen hiked up the long track to the Lac de l'Aupillon and up to its summit, returning by the lovely Rioclar valley.

**Le Cimet (3020m) from the Col de la Cayolle** After a testing drive to the pass, Peter and Jen bagged another 3000m peak while I walked up to the half-full Lac de l'Aupillon by the same route they used.



*Young Alpine Field Mouse*

**Le Peissieou (2406m) and Tête de Louis XVI (2408m) from Les Clots** The second hill is named because of its resemblance to the recumbent head of the former king. As a route on the north flank of the Ubaye, it gave good views of the Sèolane summits.

**La Croix de l'Alpe (2591m) and Tête Dure d'Enchastrayes (2653m) from La Rente** This route took us up two more peaks on the southern side of Barcelonnette giving our final high-level views of Ubaye. We met another shepherd and were again sniffed by his *patous* dogs who fortunately decided that we were harmless to the flock.

*Peter on the pinnacled descent route from Monte Scaletta*



**Monte Scaletta (2840m) from Col de Larche** This scenic route begins with a gentle ascent of the Vallon de l'Orrenaye with its lovely lakes to reach the Italian border and the even more beautiful Roburent lakes. Some scrambling, a WW1 tunnel and military remains on the summit completed a memorable day.

**La Croix de l'Alpe (2591m) and Tête Dure d'Enchastrayes (2653m) from La Rente** Our last route took us up two more peaks on the southern side of Barcelonnette giving our final high-level views of Ubaye. We met another shepherd and were again sniffed by his *patous* dogs who fortunately decided that we were harmless to the flock.

*Mick on the Le Peissieou ridge*



# Mera Peak, Nepal

Fiona Smith

Inspired by summiting my first 6,000m mountain in Bolivia earlier in the year and with a convenient two months free before starting a new job, I decided to head east, tour northern India then attempt Mera Peak – the highest trekking peak in Nepal.

Our climbing party of eight, supported by one guide, two assistant guides and four porters, met up in Kathmandu. Then due to recent major landslides, endured a ten-hour winding bus journey to Ramchapp on a coach which couldn't manage hills and aircon at the same time. A flight to Lukla the next morning and it was finally time to start trekking.

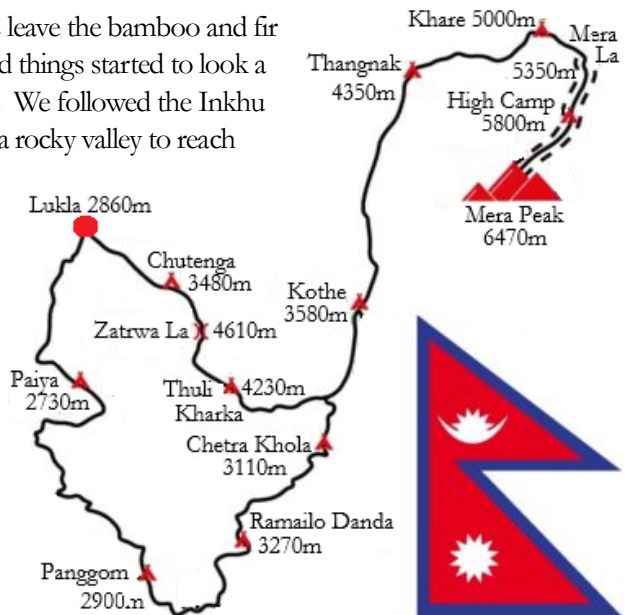
We took a longer route out, with three days in the jungle on narrow paths carved into the hillside - either steeply up or steeply down. Apparently this is red panda country but we didn't spot any. We got leeches instead. Lucky us. We slept in tea houses at Paiyan and Panggom before emerging from the trees to spend a night on the Ramailo Danda ridge.

Walking to Chhetra Khola provided an opportunity for a dip in a waterfall plunge pool and attempt the game of Carrom, a table top game that's a mix between tiddlywinks and snooker.

Day five saw us leave the bamboo and fir trees behind and things started to look a lot more alpine. We followed the Inkhu Khola river up a rocky valley to reach Kothe (a metropolis compared to the previous remote teahouses, with a proper coffee machine), then on to Thangnak the following day.



*Fiona and her camp-mate's porter*





We reached the snowline at Khare after a week in the hills and took an acclimatisation rest day. It was here that we got wifi and an updated weather forecast meant there were decisions to be made. We had planned to attempt the summit on the Thursday with Friday as contingency but both those days were forecasting 70mph winds. It made sense to make the most of the decent weather and summit a day early on a Wednesday. We would need to skip base camp and make our way straight to high camp - gambling good weather against the risk of acute mountain sickness.

It was a rocky path up to base camp and then time to put the crampons on. Just another 2km to high camp but hard work on the snowy ridge, especially when the sun was out. We reached high camp mid-afternoon. Twenty tents clinging to the mountainside below a rocky outcrop had been placed there for the season. We had an early tea of dal bhat, '*dal bhat power, 24hour*' was the slogan then watched the sun set over a blanket of clouds with mountains, including Everest, peaking through. My head was hurting but I was not too cold. Now at 5800m, this was the highest I've ever slept.

A 1 am wake up call for summit day. We were split across two ropes each with four clients and two guides. It was straight onto the glacier. Clear skies meant lots of stars and you could see the lines of head torch lights belonging to groups ahead of us. It's always mentally tough when it's dark. Slowly putting one cramponed foot in front of the other, your head torch only illuminating the rope connecting you to the person ahead. The unrelenting steepness was challenging and morale was getting pretty





low. But then dawn broke and seeing the sky turn orange behind the mountains made the hard work worth it.

Eventually the steepness started to ease and I could see the summit, a steep mound with people on top. There were fixed ropes up to the top but these weren't really needed. There was a steep drop on one side but the snow steps were good.

We caught up with the other half of our group on the summit. All eight of us made it to the top,

summitting at 7.18am. There were a lot of hugs and smiles for our team photo.

The view from the top was something else. Clear blue skies and views of five 8000ers- Everest, Kangchenjunga, Lhotse, Makalu and Cho Oyu. To be surrounded by so many snow capped giants is something I've never experienced before. Inspiring.



What goes up much come down and it was a long way down. All the way back to Khare with a stop at high camp for some noodles. After a day's rest we retraced our steps, stopping a night at Kothe, then to Taktho where we branched off on the short route back, steeply up to Thuli Kharka. We woke up to snow for the final day of our trek, a push up to the Zwarta Le Pass at 4660m before descending almost 2000 vertical meters back to Llukla. Crossing a final prayer flag-decorated suspension bridge (above) and we were done. Mera Peak trek complete.

Having climbed two 6000ers in the same year, making comparisons is inevitable. Travelling with the YRC gives you a confidence that people know what they are doing which I didn't have on this trip, most people having underestimated the challenge. Tea houses rather than tents made for comfier nights' sleep and easier hygiene but I missed the variety of food from the Bolivian trip. Nepal was a lot of rice and noodles. The scenery on both trips was unforgettably beautiful but there is something about being surrounded by the Himalayan peaks that is very special.

Overall a great mountaineering year for me and I'm proud to have summited Mera, setting a new altitude Personal Best of 6,461m.

# Dragon Cave, Kelmand, Albania

Dave  
Williams



from the hotel rise up to 2,500m.

Caves in this area are generally vertical and have been recorded to minus 435m finishing at sumps or tight rifts so the chance of deeper things is a possibility. The main cave we visited, Dragon Cave, was a strenuous daily two-hour walk up one of these mountains to the entrance slot in the karst. The scrambling up to it proved too tight for one of our team.



I accepted an invitation to join a 2024 expedition made up of Eldon, YSS, YRC, and Kendal CC members, going to the Kelmand province of Albania. This is an area Eldon PC have explored on and off since 2009. Our base was the Hotel Alpini in Lepushe, a settlement in the former Kelmand Municipality, Shkoder county. This northern part of Albania a fairly rugged, remote region bordering Montenegro. Impressive peaks seen

Our objective was to push the bottom of one of the leads in Dragon where a previous trip finished at a pitch head strewn with rubble and a tight spiky rift. This might connect with a neighbouring chamber although we hoped this would lead us to further new discoveries.

It took a couple of trips to ferry gear up and into the cave. Luckily the previous year's team had left everything largely rigged except for the entrance pitch. After rigging the tight entrance pitch we continued down several pitches and a snug climb to the last pitch to reach the old low point, called Friday 13<sup>th</sup>.

Expedition leader, Ade, set off to reconnoitre the rift. Forcing his way along knocked off odd bits of rock which were hindering progress. He placed a few bolts with some difficulty due to the tight and sharp nature of the rift. He reached a point where he could see a stream about six metres below but passage was virtually impossible, he scraped his way back out and handed the gear to me

and I set off over the precarious boulder slope and the edge. Keeping tight to the wall and with a couple of bolts set high it proved to be not too bad and I soon reached the edge of the drop. I placed another bolt high which enabled me to swing out away from the boulders and, at arms length, placed another bolt to get a clear drop via one rebelay and the bottom possibly 30m below. Here a small stream emerged probably the one Ade could see. It immediately sank again in boulders.

The chamber had a huge boulder at its base and a rift going off left from the stream over a drop. Could this be a connection with the other chamber? After a look around we headed out of the cave, keen too get back to bolting the rift.

Next day we split into two teams: three of us headed down to Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, while two including Ade headed into a place called Dragon's Lair, a chamber Ade suggests was close and possibly links up Dragon's Lair with Friday 13<sup>th</sup>. As soon as we arrived at our low point we could hear the others and soon spotted lights across the rift. I bolted an easy traverse and a short drop to complete the connection so we could join up with the others.

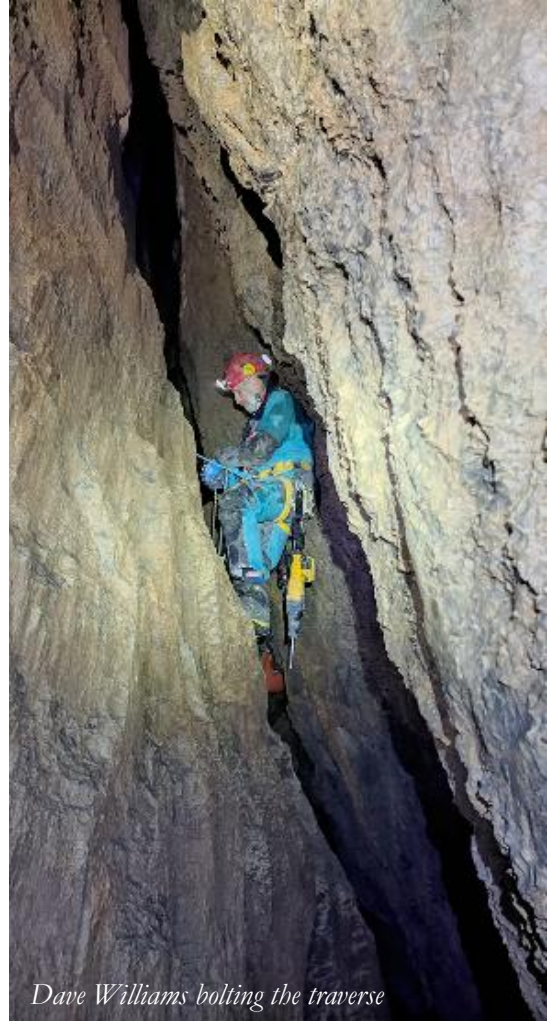
Ade took over and bolted a further short drop at the rift's end to a passage and a further short pitch. This landed in a small chamber with a window looking into a large chamber where a rope could be seen hanging. This rope was from a previous visit to a spot called Uneventful Horizon where the main way on goes down to -363m.

Everybody started readying themselves to head out, but while crossing the traverse I had bolted earlier I spied a small opening in the floor probably five metres below me. I thought it a shame to come this far and not investigate it. So, quickly rigging the rope I dropped down to the hole and forced my way inside. Below was a pitch of about ten metres. A quick bolt in the side and I was soon at the bottom staring at a diminutive sump pool.

What a pity it didn't go further but at least we connected all the low points and got a better understanding of the system but progress for now seems unlikely. It's always a little strange how a cave of such large proportions can suddenly stop with no obvious way on.

Later we visited a couple of other known caves in the area primarily as tourist trips and also some prospecting a variety of holes yielding a couple of possible leads to come back too.

Overall this area is a beautiful area to visit either caving or walking: the scenery is stunning, and we we saw noone in the mountains except for a solitary farmer. We look forward to returning while it remains peaceful.



*Dave Williams bolting the traverse*

**The Expedition Team:**

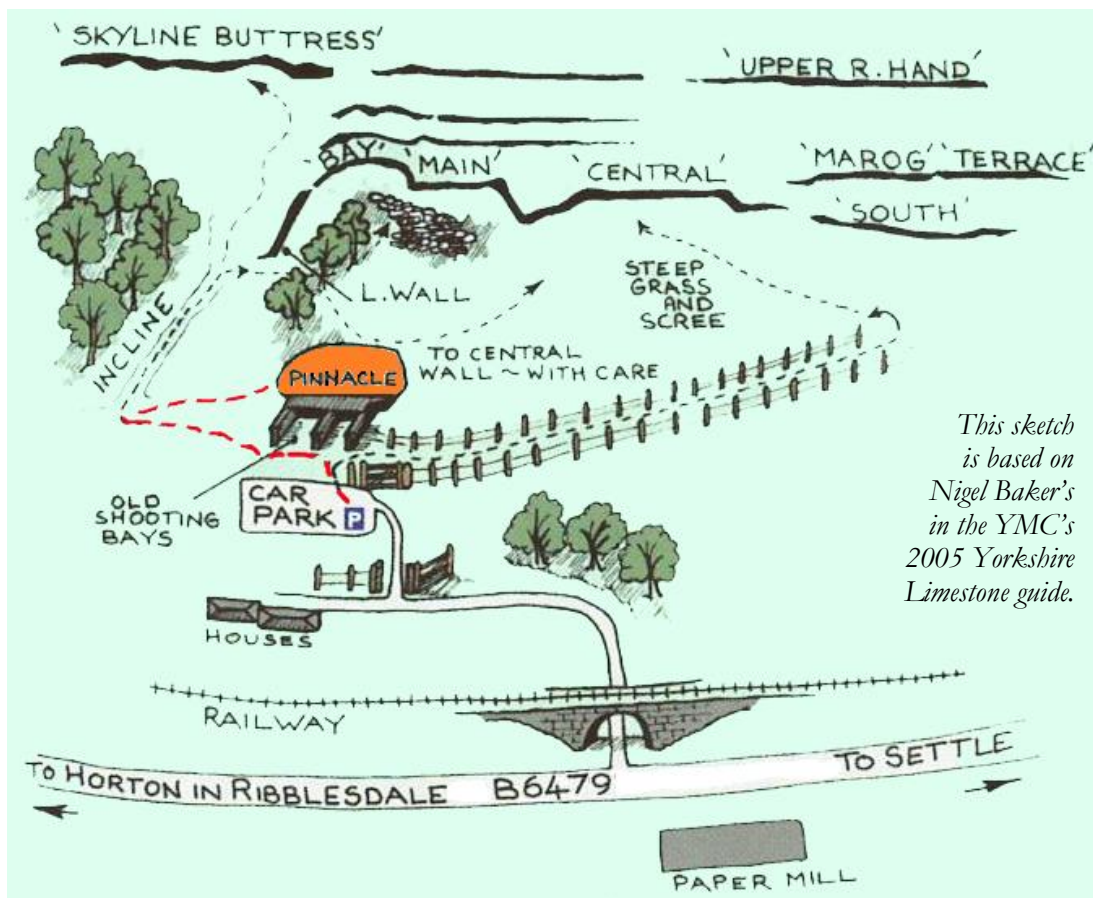
- Sophie Bushall, Kendal CC
- Mark Gration, Eldon PC
- Ade Pedley, Expd. leader, YSS
- Nicola Wellings, YSS
- David Williams, YRC
- Gareth Williams, Kendal CC.

# Langcliffe's Back Pinnacle Wall – New Routes 2024

Ged Campion &  
Glyn Edwards

Langcliffe Quarry (Stainforth Scar on OS maps) lies above the Settle to Horton-in-Ribblesdale road, a couple of miles north of Settle, just past the Watershed Mill café and shopping complex. With its imposing size and loose walls it has a reputation as being both impressive but sometimes oppressive. Quarrying ceased in the 1960s and in the '70s its base was used as a landfill site, but thankfully in 2005 it was given protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. The site houses an almost perfectly preserved 1873 Hoffman Kiln for the production of lime from limestone. It is the best such preserved kiln in Britain and attracts many visitors. The crag is also a nesting site for Peregrine Falcons.

Glyn Edwards, Colin Binks, and I developed a number of new routes on the Langcliffe Skyline Buttress a few years ago (see YRCJ 2021, Vol.14, No.4,p128-9). However, we decided to return and explore unclimbed areas in the main quarry. Langcliffe Back Pinnacle Wall is the featured, pocketed wall facing east to the Main Wall. It gets a short-lived glimmer of sunlight in the morning in summer and provides excellent climbing especially if you want to find a shaded crag on hot summer days.



*The approach route to Langcliffe Quarry's Back Pinnacle Wall is marked by red dashes.  
Sketch based on Nigel Baker's in the YMC's 2005 Yorkshire Limestone guide, p300.*

All these routes were developed in August and September 2024. Glyn Edwards, a one-time member of the YRC, was largely responsible for developing this site and must be given credit for the amount of work done to complete the ascents. The development of this crag did provide an interesting ethical dilemma. Although there is a selection of 'sports routes' at Langcliffe Quarry the site has historically been designated as a 'traditional climbing' area hence our reluctance to place bolts and wish to only use pitons where the rock did not naturally lend itself to placing nuts and cams. Some of the routes below have been graded as clip-ups as well as trad because style and 'feel' of ascent is more akin to sports climbing. A rack of rocks, sizes 1 to 8, plus any cams (Friends©) mentioned in the text should suffice, together with two 40m ropes. Most of the gardening of the crag has been done. However, care is needed on the final section of some routes which top out on a grassy, scree ledges, and loose rock. Generally though, the rock is good and sound.

Glyn Edwards has kindly provided this exclusive and detailed guide to the routes

### **Dustman Dave severe 14m**

A route up dubious stacked blocks at the righthand end. Not recommended.

#### **1. Tiger's Head E2 5C 14m**

Just left, sketchy moves lead up to good holds and a peg at the top of the slight pillar. Continue to a good Roc 8 and a difficult fingery move to reach good holds and another peg. Step left and, with more technical fingery moves, gain the easier upper wall and arête. Lower off on left.

#### **2. My Old Man E1 5b 14m**

Just left again, step off the block and rock up to a jug and a peg. Climb up left on crimp holds to reach good holds at the break and gear. (Friend 2 and/or wires). Continue with pleasant climbing moving right to a crack. Descent as for Tiger's Head.

#### **3. Crystal Crack E1 5c 15m**

Just left again is a thread at 5m. Clip and gain this, first by a fingery traverse from the right, then forceful climbing on better but spaced holds. Now continue up the intermittent crack with good protection. At the top gain the ledge and walk left to a good thread lower off (in situ) on the big blocks.

#### **4. Daisy Roots E2 5c 15m**

Left again a series of finger pockets leads

powerfully to a small sapling stump at the break. Use double ropes for this and loop the stumps with a sling using a long stick to protect the start. Step up and move right to a crack with good wires and holds. Up this and gain the next break and the featured hollow on the left. Climb directly up this steeply on good holds, heading to the right of the small tree, passing a peg on the way. Use the fixed rope to pull onto the ledge. Lower off as for Crystal Crack.

#### **5. Pocket Profusion E1 5c 14m**

Left again is a series of pockets lead rightwards and up to the larger stump, pre-clip and gain this with some difficulty. Continue to the hollow of Daisy Roots and up this to the steepening, but then move left onto the ramp of Secret Garden. Up this to climb the headwall right of the crack and left of the tree. Use the fixed rope to pull onto the ledge. Lower off as Crystal Crack.

#### **6. Unsung Hero E2 5c (F6b) 14m**

Start at the same place as Pocket Provision, but, using an undercut, move up and left onto the wall with some difficulty, again protected by a sling on the stump. Continue direct, passing two pegs to an intricate finish on pockets which are hard to locate and to reach, gaining a thread and ledge. This is really a clip up hence the suggested French grade. Move up right to the lower off as for the previous routes.

### 7. Secret Garden HVS 5a 14m

Use two ropes and pre-clip the tree stumps for this. Step onto the wall from off the tree stump left of *Unsung Hero*. Climb on good holds to the small stump and continue easily to the first peg on *Unsung Hero*. Traverse right and up on ledges (it's possible to stretch left and clip the second peg on *Unsung Hero*) to a crack and climb this to the top. Use the fixed rope to pull onto the ledge.

### 8. Dilly E2 5c 15m

Left again, pull up to the ledge and peg at 4m. Find a Roc 4 slot and good pockets to contemplate the crux moves on small holds to reach a break and peg and sling. This can also be climbed left of the Roc 4 but is no easier. Reach up to the next break and wires, then move up on small holds to the final break. (Friend 3). Finish steeply on good holds, passing a thread (possible lower off) to the top and a fixed lower off on a block further to the left.

### 10. Dally E1 5b 15m

Start left again by a tree close to the wall and gain a standing position on the ledge (Roc 3). Nice footwork leads left and up to reach a peg then fingery moves to the break and

gear (level with the tree 3m to the left).

Move up the crack then traverse the break rightwards to join and finish up *Dilly* to avoid bad rock. (Friend 3) Use double ropes for this.

### 11. Lilly E1 5b 13m (F6a+)

Immediately left again stretch up for a jug (peg on the left) pull onto the ledge and move left as for *Dally* but go a bit further to a slight hollow and peg directly below the tree. Make a few thin moves to the tree and use it to get established on the wall behind. Make interesting moves up past a peg to the top, lower off on a block on the right. More or less a clip-up hence the suggested French grade.

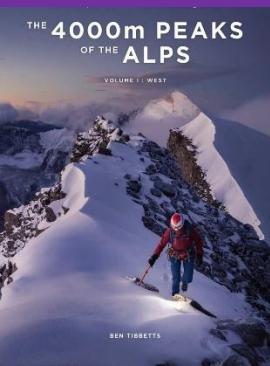
### 12. Bit Scabious E1 5c 13m

Start to the left again at the limit of the clean rock and by a tree, (sling on this to protect the start). A few stretchy moves reach another slight hollow and another peg. Continue, with nice climbing on pocketed rock to break left of the tree. Use the crack on the left for protection but climb the wall directly to a peg and the top. Climbing the crack is easier. Lower off as for the previous routes.



*The Pinnacle at Langcliffe Quarry*

# Reviews



## Ben Tibbetts, *The 4000m Peaks of the Alps, Vol I: West*

This is the first volume of a planned two volume work by mountain guide and artist Ben Tibbetts on ‘selected alpine climbs and ski mountaineering routes on the... 4,000m peaks of the Alps.’

In Volume I, Tibbetts has described a selection of routes on mountains over 4,000m in the western portion of the Alps: the Écrins massif, Gran Paradiso, the Mont Blanc massif, and the western Pennine Alps. Summits east of the Mattertal will be covered in Tibbetts’s second volume of the guidebook. Tibbetts has compiled a selection of routes he judges to be ‘the most interesting or beautiful routes, in addition to the easiest or most popular ways to the summit’, from the well-known to the more esoteric.

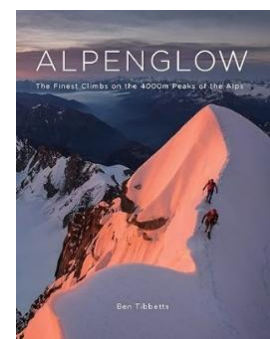
For each route, Tibbetts has provided a useful summary of the probable best times of the year to climb, the anticipated conditions, and of the approach, climb, and descent. Tibbetts has also indicated which routes would be suitable for ski mountaineering expeditions. The history of first and other notable ascents has been well-researched and provides interesting context to the route. Quotes from ascensionists add colour and interest. Many readers will recognise and relate to

Karl Blodig’s reflection on reaching the summit of the Grande Rocheuse ‘... with a strangely mixed feeling of unspeakable bliss and legitimate pride.’ Each entry has climbing notes from Tibbetts’s own ascents, the entry for the Dent du Géant – ‘... the guidebook descriptions we had found were vague, and I wasn’t at all sure we were in the right place’ perhaps alludes to a practical motivation for Tibbetts to have produced this volume.

The front flap describes the book as ‘...replete with in-depth route information...’ Anyone reading no further might assume that there is sufficient detail in the book to produce a route card. Thankfully not. If ‘more route detail’ can mean ‘less adventure’, then Tibbetts has struck a good balance: sufficient descriptive detail to understand the route,

accompanying imagery to inspire and stimulate, but without turning a guidebook into an instructional manual. Tibbetts has acknowledged the effects of climate change on glaciers retreating, and on rock degrading. On some routes, the loss of snow has increased slope angle which has led to grades being increased.

Readers may already be familiar with Tibbetts’s abilities as an artist, his 2019 work ‘Alpenglow’ is a coffee-table publication of photographs, drawings, and route descriptions for the eighty-two 4,000m Alps. Victor





Saunders described the photography in *Alpenglow* as ‘the result of an obsessional effort to be in the right place at the right time’ and Tibbetts has applied the same standards to this work. In ‘The 4000m Peaks of the Alps’, his images provide both an effective base upon which he has built the route topos, and a shot of inspiration to go (back) there.

Drawing comparisons between Tibbetts’s book and Martin Moran’s ‘The 4000m Peaks of the Alps’ feels simultaneously unnecessary and yet inevitable. Tibbetts’s scope is broader, being organised using the 50 major peaks while covering all eighty-two of the UIAA’s 4,000m summits across both volumes. Moran includes information on hut locations and contact details while Tibbetts sticks to recommending the most relevant hut for each route. Tibbetts’s book is larger (making the photographs easier to enjoy, and the book will stay open on your desk without having to break the spine). It is also heavier than Moran’s: at 730g, it may not be accompanying you to the summit.

Commenting on his motive for producing the book, Tibbetts reflects that, having completed more routes since the release of ‘*Alpenglow*’, and having collected knowledge and photographs during these climbs, ‘... it gradually became inevitable that I should compile this information into a new guidebook’. With this first volume, Ben Tibbetts has delivered a well-researched, detailed, interesting, and excellently produced guide to the 4,000m peaks of the western Alps. Whether for remembering, inspiring or planning, it will be a valuable addition to an Alpine mountaineer’s bookshelf. (TD)

The 4000m Peaks of the Alps, Volume I: West (*Alpenglow Editions*, 2024) £36.

Previous View / Grand Combin

**14c / South-East Ridge 1400m, AD, III+**

FA: O C. Jones, A. Bivier and P. Gaspoz, 10th September 1991

📄 Glacier (Climent)


📍 4hrs from Glacier

📍 Refuge Charella Amiante

📍 7.8hrs, mixed ridge

📍 5.8hrs to Refuge Charella Amiante

📍 Steep skiing itinerary - S1 / E2




This long, wild and exotic ridge drives a direct line to the top of the Combin de Grafenere. Gained by a traverse from the Col du Sonadon, the stepped ridge is then followed almost in its entirety. The route follows a beautiful line in an outstanding situation, but admittedly the climbing is discontinuous. The majority of the route is a lung-busting climb at about PD and provides ample time to look around and soak in the growing panorama. This casual ascent ends abruptly at an 80m rock bastion just below the summit: a spectacular climax to the route. The rock is reasonable, but this buttress may have changed during the last 100 years, for the climbing is both longer and more difficult than early descriptions suggest.


**Conditions**

As the first climbers wrote: the ridge "consists chiefly of loose, shaly rocks, with occasional beds of snow, and is, on the whole, of no great steepness."


Historically, this route is generally climbed in summer. However, it is much more pleasant to climb in late spring or early summer (April-July) before the snow melts. The upper rock climbing is steep and juggy, and none the worse for mixed conditions.

© Ben Tibbetts





Mount Grand Combin SE face as seen from Mont Collin. Below: Valentin on the SE ridge



**Peter J Biggar**  
**Harold Raeburn: The Steps of a Giant**

All who have been on Scottish winter meets must have seen Raeburn's routes marked on maps or in guidebooks. With a single ice axe, cutting steps, he was the leading climber on snow and ice in Scotland for almost three decades.

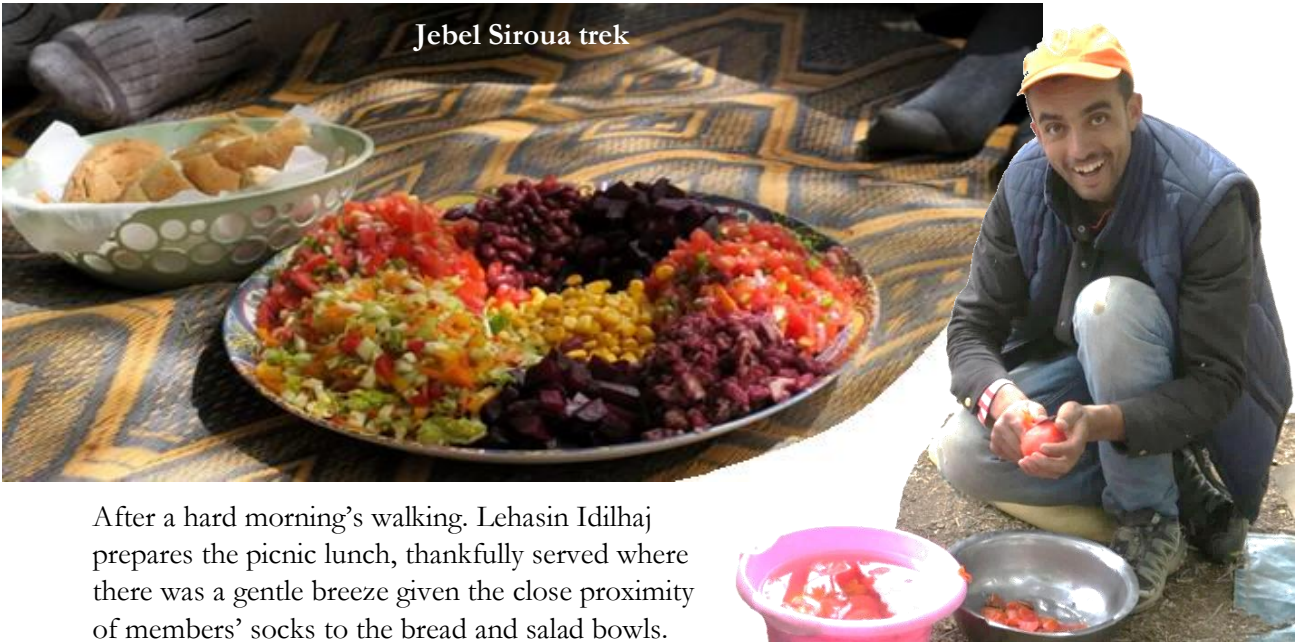
Biggar's biography does him justice. It draws on his companions' accounts and the records of the SMC besides Raeburn's writing. Familiarity with the steeper crags of the main winter climbing areas in the Highlands is a distinct advantage in appreciating the locations of the outings described, though the photographs are a help in this respect. The book reflects our society's zeitgeist by detailing his relationship to female climbers and the decline in his mental health.

Ascents of Observatory Ridge, Tower Ridge, North-East Buttress, Crowberry Gully, and Green Gully are all analysed, as are his notable descents. But there is more to Raeburn than Scottish snow: the Lake District, the Alps, Norway, the Caucasus, an attempt on Kangchenjunga and the unfortunate 1921 Everest Reconnaissance are all covered.

A copy of this 468 page hardback is available to members in the Lowstern Library. (MS)



Jebel Siroua trek



After a hard morning's walking, Lehasin Idilhaj prepares the picnic lunch, thankfully served where there was a gentle breeze given the close proximity of members' socks to the bread and salad bowls.

# New Journals in the Lowstern Library

## Craven Pothole Club Records 154, 155, 156 April, July, November



Plenty of potential interest for members in these issues. For example, in the April issue we learn that Stump Cross Cavern's owner is planning a development in the field across the road where the CPC have been digging, then undertaking remedial work to make entrances safe for the public. There is also a book review of a romantic fiction novel in which Gaping Gill is a factor in the main character's development. Scrabble features too. *Love Letters on Hazel Lane* if you are curious. In the July issue John Sutcliffe gets a mention. He's there again in November issue featured in connection with his 2023 visit to Magpie Mine in Derbyshire. That account not only describes a trip in through the sough but outlines the fascinating history of the mine's workings. Finally, reports of the CPC trip to La Pierre St Martin in the French Pyrenees are in the November issue.

## Grampian Club Bulletin 2024, Issue 71



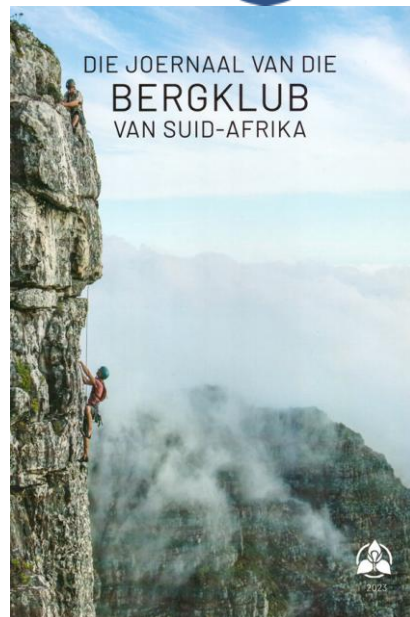
There is an appreciation of long-standing member Sandy McLeod who I remember dropping in on a couple of the Whit meets in the North West Highlands in the '80s. The Skye Trail, Dolomite VFs, Annapurna basecamp, and of course Inbhirfhaolain, also figure. The GC has 226 members.

## The Journal of the Mountain Club of South Africa, 2023, no.126

This Journal could not be posted surface mail according to Cape Town's Clareinch Post Office and was posted air mail but then took 46 days to reach Yorkshire. It was worth the wait and I can recommend dipping into it when you are next at Lowstern.

The 175 pages of contents are diverse. There is a summary of the mountaineering and map-making life of Peter Slingsby who has recently been made an Honorary Life Member of the MCSA's Cape Town section. Peter spills the beans on what interesting features he never marks on his maps.

Besides the editorial on what constitutes mountaineering, and coverage of many areas of South Africa, there are well-written articles on rockfalls, a via ferrata rising 400m in three pitches, alpinism, Cho Oyo, Himlung Himal in Nepal. Plus, reference to a plucky Boer War British soldier hopelessly cornered in a ravine who repeatedly shouted out demands to the Boer guerillas to surrender to him. Of course, they shot him. But ghostly echoes have been heard in that misty *Engelsmanskloof* or Englishman's ravine, near Tafelberg..



# Club Proceedings

## Yorkshire Ramblers' Club 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting

At the AGM, held at the Settle Social Club, our Vice President chaired the meeting with 34 members present as the meeting started and more arriving a little later. The meeting's business was conducted efficiently allowing time for queries to be discussed.

Membership now numbers 157: eight new Members (including Honorary Members); four resignations; and five deaths. There are ten new Prospective Members, 12 in all.

Financially the Club is in a good position, with funds available to cover the cost of planned work on the Lowstern washrooms and the drying room. Broadly, this year across the two huts the income covered the expenditure: the deficit at LHG being covered by the surplus at Lowstern. Hut use, being lower than several years ago, remains a concern.

Officers and other post holders for the coming year are:

President	Ged Campion	Membership Secretary	Helen Smith
Immediate Past President	Becca Humphreys	Meets Secretary	Tim Josephy
Vice President	Conrad Tetley	Editor	Michael Smith
Hon. Treasurer	Martyn Trasler	Librarian	Arthur Salmon
Hon. Secretary	Mick Borroff	Archivist	Alan Linford
Huts Booking Secretary	Richard Josephy	Hon. Auditor	Richard Taylor
LHG Wardens	Ali Renton/Ged Campion	Tacklemaster	Ged Campion
Lowstern Warden	Richard Sealey	Webmaster	Mick Borroff

Elected committee members are:

Robert Crowther, Harvey Lomas, Rory Newman, Steve Richards, and Helen Smith

Three Honorary Memberships were conferred with the unanimous support of the meeting. Firstly, Tim Josephy, a past President, Secretary and Meets Secretary who has made a huge contribution to the Club over more than 60 years and continues not only in office but to be one of the most frequent of attenders on meets. The other two were prominent Norwegian mountaineers, Nils Hagen and Knut Tønsberg, who have recently been Principal Guests at Annual Dinners and have given continuing support to the Club in its activities and by documenting Norwegian aspects of our history.

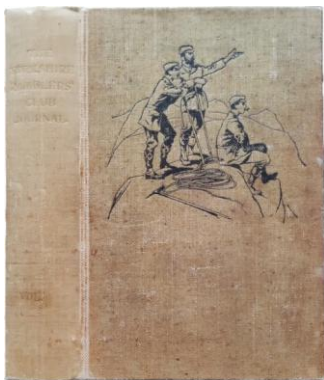
During this year a scheme has been introduced for financial support of established members in developing their experience in Club-related activities. Support may be in the form of a grant or a loan. The first application for such support is currently being prepared.

The incoming President aims to use his period in office to clarify the position with respect to LHG; get the building work at Lowstern underway; encourage greater use of club huts by members; encourage applications from younger people; re-invigorate caving in the Club; consider issues of diversity and inclusivity to widen participation in our activities; encourage more members to lead meets and help run the Club.

The meeting observed a minute's silence in memory of those who had died since the last AGM: Derek Smithson, Frank Walker, Tony Penny, John Colton and Simon Stembridge.

# YRC Journal Volume Numbering

Over the last generation we have managed to get the naming and numbering of YRC Journals into a bit of a pickle. Individual issues of the Journal have not been identified consistently. The following describes the situation and its resolution to help anyone trying to locate particular issues, especially in libraries holding bound volumes.



Historically, from 1899 to 1992 the individual issues were identified by the year of publication. For library copies, a number of issues would be bound together into a volume – volumes I to XI for those years.

Between 1994 and 2017 the publication became six-monthly and used the titles *The Yorkshire Rambler* (1994-2003), *Yorkshire Rambler* (2004-2005), and then *YRC Journal* (2006-2017). The 24 issues from 1994 to 2005 were bound as volumes XIIa, b and c. The remaining 23 issues (2006-2017) were bound as volumes XIIIa and b.

From 2018 to 2023 the *Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal* was published annually and bound as library volumes XIVa and b, with issues numbered 1-6, and with the years shown on their front covers.

This 2024 issue and the next few issues will make volume XV. The intention is that about three to five such issues will make future bound volumes.

The following table summarises the above information:

<i>Bound Volumes</i>	<i>Years</i>	<i>Issues, publication interval, and size</i>	<i>Titles</i>
I to XI	1899 to 1992	40 <i>ad hoc</i> issues, identified by year, 14.5cm x 22.4cm	<i>The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal</i>
XIIa,b,c	1994 to 2005	24 six-monthly issues, identified by year and Winter/Summer, A4	<i>The Yorkshire Rambler</i> , then from 2004 <i>Yorkshire Rambler</i>
XIIIa,b	2006 to 2017	23 six-monthly issues identified by year and Winter/Summer, A4	<i>YRC Journal</i>
XIVa,b	2018 to 2023	6 issues, identified by year, and named volume 14 numbers 1 to 6, 17.2cm x 24.7cm	<i>Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal</i>
XV	2024 onwards	Intended to have about 3 to 5 annual issues per volume, identified by year, 17.2cm x 24.7cm	<i>Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal</i>

# Chippings

## Sid Perou's Award at LHG

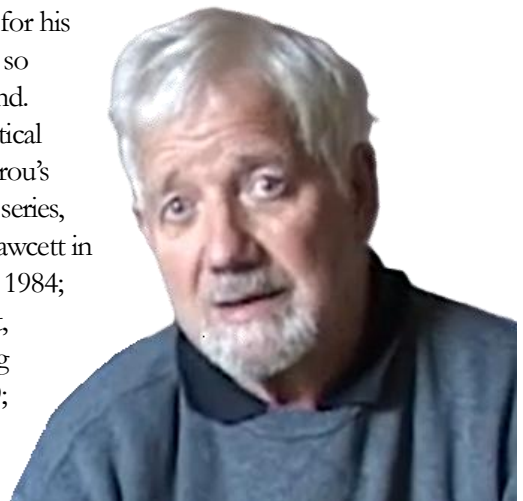
Members who have recently visited Low Hall Garth and ventured into the barn may have noticed a golden trophy on the mantel piece above the stove. Thanks to Carol Whalley we are lucky to have received the gift of one of her friend Sid Perou's much sought after trophies. Sid was a doyen of caving and climbing films earning him many awards including an Emmy.

He died on the 14<sup>th</sup> July this year in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand following two operations in the previous month.

Sid leaves an amazing legacy. His filming career started after working as a sound recordist on the BBC's 'That Was The Week That Was' in the 1960s. TW3 was a TV satirical

comedy presented by David Frost. Colleagues knowing Sid was a caver (partly on account of him turning up at work on Monday mornings with face and hair still caked in mud from long active weekends underground) suggested he came along to record the sound when the BBC wanted to make an outside broadcast on a cave rescue. He wasn't meant to film but Sid's caving expertise and practical ability to make things work, often with the most basic of material, meant he took over and made the first of his many films. Many of these are available on YouTube.

In 1999 Carol presented Sid (right) with the Giles Barker Award for his continuing excellence and the entertainment that he has given to so many cavers for more than 30 years by creating films underground. The award we have at LHG was for his 1981 Troll Wall - the vertical mile, filmed in Norway for the BBC. Other examples of Sid' Perou's films include: Sunday at Sunset Pot, 1967; Beneath the Pennines series, 1977; Rock athlete series, 1980; Fingertip phenomenon - Ron Fawcett in Verdon, 1984; Realm of Darkness - Hollow Mountain of Mulu, 1984; Balloon over Yorkshire series, 1984, Search Dogs of the Summit, 1987; Gaping Gill - 100 Years of Exploration, 1995; Cave Diving Story: Where Angels Fear, 1989; Adventure: The Climbers, 1989; John Dunne – Big Issue, 1998; Eli Simpson and the BSA, 2012; and The Longest Dive, 2015..



## Little Langdale farmers Herbert and George

Longer-standing members will remember a good friend of the YRC, Herbert Thompson, who farmed from Low Hall Garth and died two decades ago. The bench under the Low Hall Garth window is dedicated to the memory of George. During the January, New Year meet at LHG, we learned in the Three Shires Inn that Herbert's neighbouring farmer and friend, George, a regular at the Three Shires bar, had died. He farmed Birk Howe above Little Langdale Tarn.

George's uncle was Jim Birkett. Jim was a quarryman (slate river) and the 1930s climber noted for his ground-breaking first ascent of Overhanging Bastion on the North Face of Castle Rock. He was at the forefront of the new wave of working-class climbers significantly advancing the top climbing grades.

Herbert Thompson was the son of a Langdale quarryman. He started his own working life at Sty Rigg slate quarry above Tilberthwaite, in the early 1930s. Much later he recalled that despite the Great Depression at that time "there was always somebody buying slate." He became the tenant farmer at Low Hall Garth in 1955 and remained there until March 2000 when he finally retired and moved to live in Ambleside.



### A Break at Kilmahog

Returning from the Etive meet, as they passed Kilmahog, two members took advantage of a drier weather window by walking to Bochart Hill's glacial erratic Samson's Stone and Dumore hillfort. The latter has impressive multi-tiered earthwork defences. The round makes an interesting one-hour break and has ample parking 450m southwest along the A812. Leaping from Samson's stone is optional.



### Parys Mine

Tim Josephy (right) gave Paul Magson (centre), Wolverhampton's Dave Williams (left), and Ged Campion a tour of Parys Mine on Anglesey. With 4,000 years of mining there, starting in the Bronze Age, it is perhaps unsurprising that in the 18<sup>th</sup> century this was the world's largest copper mine. Zinc, lead, silver and gold have also been extracted. Over the years, several members have experienced the acidic waters in this mine but this time, after recent wet weather, it was diluted.



## The Erratics of Casterton's Fellfoot Bridleway

Filling a couple of spare hours with a walk from Kirkby Lonsdale a member went up through Casterton, beyond the Roman Road called Wandales Lane to take the rougher Fellfoot Road bridleway contouring along the west flank of Brownthwaite between SD635811 and SD636785. There he came across three small walled enclosures, each with a stile for human access. Inside each one is a large stone, a glacial erratic. OpenStreetMap labels them livestock pens but they are built to keep livestock out. He then found out more online without solving these two puzzles:

- Should something made to keep out livestock be called a sheepfold or a livestock pen?
- Were the glacial erratics dropped along the future line of the bridleway, or the bridleway sited to pass close by them?



Which came first, the course of Fellfoot Road bridleway or the position of the stones? Clearly, the stones were dropped before modern humans walked along there, but there might be processes like those forming lateral moraines which place glacial erratics in rough lines. Alternatively, curious people may have chosen to cross the hillside passing by several of these unusual stones, later protecting them with the walls.

On the slopes of Brownthwaite there is also, an embanked stone circle or ring cairn (bottom right) on the slope 320m above the bridleway at SD639799 probably dating from the Bronze Age.

Derek

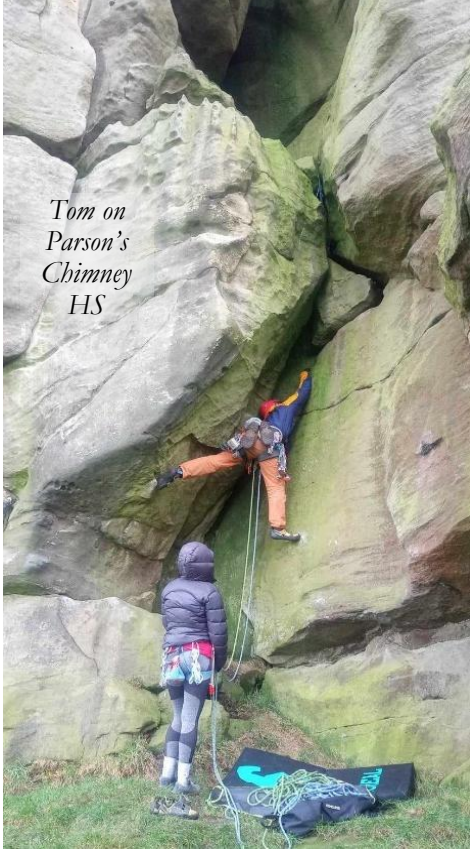
Bush recalls regular walks with the YRC's Lancashire group going from Barbon up by the beck, past Bullpot Farm, skirting Brownthwaite and returning along Fellfoot bridleway before calling in for a pint at the Barbon Inn.





## Almscliffe in January

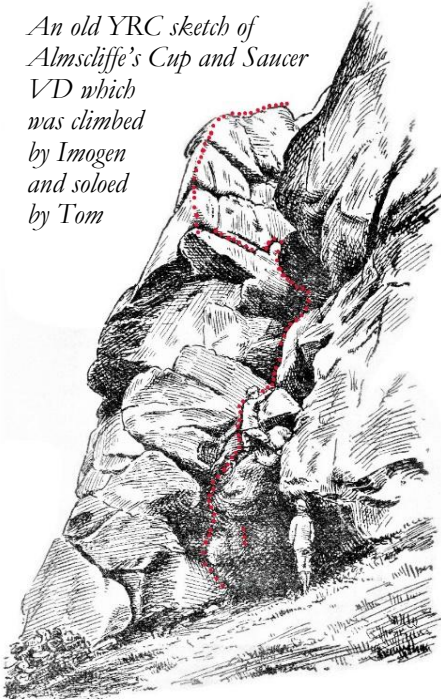
While this year's January meet was drawing to a close, Tom Spencer and Imogen Campion were spreading the word about the YRC on a chilly day's climbing at Almscliffe Crag with James Smart. James and Tom were members of the Hull University Climbing and Hiking Club, and outings such as this are opportunities to introduce climbers to the YRC. Our then President Elect, Ged Campion, was there as photographer pointing out the Club's contributions to the climbs there.



*Tom on  
Parson's  
Chimney  
HS*

Our Vice President also made his way to Almscliffe but the muddy approach meant he didn't reach the foot of the climbs.

*An old YRC sketch of  
Almscliffe's Cup and Saucer  
VD which  
was climbed  
by Imogen  
and soloed  
by Tom*



*Imogen in  
Long Chimney  
at sunset*



### **Not Snowshoeing in the Massif de Bauges**

Mick Borroff previously visited the Bauges in France for a snowshoeing trip (see [YRCJ 2020, p66-74](#)). Returning for a fortnight this year, he found the snow cover was unfortunately above the level of the usual safe snowshoe routes, so with no new precipitation, the snowshoes remained in the boot of the car unused. Even the primroses were coming out in bloom and he

saw a lizard. That said with a high pressure system dominating the weather, the conditions were superb for mountain hiking and any snow encountered was well-consolidated and winter walking boots were sufficient. He undertook ten varied outings which are usually raquettes routes under mostly blue skies with

wide-ranging views to the snow-capped summits above and the neighbouring Chartreuse and Belledonne massifs. Mick will happily provide further details.



*Mick at the summit of Pointe de la Galoppaz*



## Norway at its widest

Last Year's Dinner Guest, Nils Hagen, who crossed Greenland in Nansen's ski tracks and joined our summer traverse of the Jotunheimen (see p86), reflected on an earlier trip.

When Nils was young and strong he crossed Norway east-guardianwest at its widest, from Trysil on the Swedish border (where the Smith family have skied) in just two weeks to Florø

(where the Tverangers live). Day after day he walked in the rain, but the morning he woke up at Vettismorki (where we helped re turf a roof, above), the sun was shining and the world was again a wonderful place. He almost ran down to Vetti, up the other steep side of Utladalen to Stølsmaradalseter and continued westwards.

An interesting part of his walk was from Eidsbugarden (Fondsbu) over Morka-Kolddalen to Vettismorki. Kolddalen is where we started our approach to the Uranosbreen this summer. Cecil Slingsby was there in the July of 1875 and described it: *“Well is this valley named Kolddedal. A snow-bridged river, an ice-bound lake, weird peaks with blue and white glaciers descending from them, here and there a dark precipice, which make the ice and snow look whiter by contrast, all combine to make it a most weird Arctic scene, a real cold valley.”* He crossed the very large and rapid river there only after following the bank for a mile or two using a splendid [snow] bridge thirteen or fourteen feet thick and about the same width (Northern Playground, 1904, p76). We saw that those glaciers had retreated considerably since then.

In April 2025 Nils plans to relive this part of his youthful journey by skiing through Kolddalen to Vettismorki and further on to Vetti possibly using crampons and rope on the steep hillside down to the farm.

## A First Visit to the Alps

Preparing an obituary for this Journal prompted recollection of the Stembridge-Chadwick partnership. Any member preparing a meet report or an account of a short trip might usefully read this amusing 77-year-old account by ex-President Bob Chadwick in YRCJ 1949, p198- ([tinyurl.com/YRCBobAlp](https://tinyurl.com/YRCBobAlp)). Besides being a description of typical guided post-war ascents there are illuminating historical references and a concluding section of sage practical advice for any novice alpinists.



## New Honorary Members

Three new Honorary Memberships were conferred at this year's Annual General Meeting.

**Tim Josephy** was awarded Honorary Life Membership in recognition of his substantial contributions to the Club over sixty years. He was our President from 1996 to 1998, who after the sudden death in 2012 of the then Secretary took on that role temporarily but kept at it for seven years. He only gave that up after becoming our Meets Secretary, a role he still does superbly. Such offices are important but no less so than supporting other members. A skilled caver and climber, Tim generously accompanies and encourages the less experienced on meets, both young and old, including on many Introductory Meets and Spanish meets. He always leads by example. For example, with perhaps one exception, he has led a Club meet every year since the 1990s, and more than half the years before that back to the '70s which is as far as records are to hand.



Beyond the YRC, Tim is a member of the Climbers' Club and was an active member of the Snowdonia Mountain Rescue Team. While in the RAF he piloted helicopters on sea and mountain rescue operations.

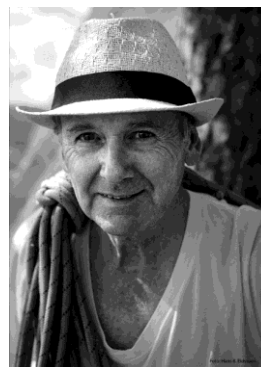
Tim joined the YRC as a Junior Member in 1965 aged 16. The lefthand photo of him was taken at a Majestic Hotel Annual Dinner in his early years. The one on the right was taken in Pembroke this year. Long may the battery capacity of his eMTB keep up with his plans for ambitious rides through the mountains.



**Nils Hagen** as principal guest at our 2023 Annual Dinner spoke about skiing across Greenland a century after Nansen using replica equipment. He had met YRC parties ski touring in Norway and stayed at Lowstern searching through John Snoad's archive material relating to our second President, Cecil Slingsby, and glacier crossings. He also accompanied a YRC party in a traverse of the Jotunheimen and used his diplomatic skills to persuade the guardian at a mountain cabin closed for a private party to allow us stay and have meals. Nils feels privileged to be an Honorary Member of the YRC, adding "especially when I see the list of the other members." He plans to be over in Britain soon.

**Knut Tønsberg** gave a talk at the 2017 Dinner weekend about Slingsby and his links with the Tønsberg family. He also took members skiing and ice-climbing before their YRC 2019 ski tour. Before this year's Jotunheimen crossing he provided advice based on personal experience about a glacier route and a trackless ridge beyond Slingsbytinden. An Alpine Club member and Norsk Tindeklub ex-president, Knut has published articles about Slingsby and guides to Norwegian mountains besides accounts of their ascents.

Knut commented that he felt it was a great honour and "a tribute to my father and grandfather as well. My grandfather had the pleasure of knowing W<sup>m</sup> Cecil Slingsby. My father and grandfather climbed with Eleanor Winthrop Young on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her father's first ascent, to the top of Store Skagastølstind in 1876. This also brings to mind when I was there with Michael Smith in 2016."



*Photo credit: Mr Hans Eidstuen*

## Cannon found at Heathrow



In a small overgrown garden by the western corner of Heathrow Airport's northern perimeter road west and Nene Road, is a half-buried cannon originally placed by General William Roy in 1784 on Hounslow Heath. It now has a plaque beside it describing its purpose. There is another one 27,406.19 feet (~8km) to the southeast in a discreet grassy cul-de-sac in Hampton.

These two form the baseline for the original Ordnance Survey mapping which took over three decades to cover almost all of England. Modern measurements suggest that Roy's baseline was accurate to within three

inches (<8cm), that is 99.999% accuracy.

The baseline's location was chosen as the flattest open piece of ground around. It is difficult nowadays to imagine this area as onetime heathland.

Two members seeking a bus stop came across the Heathrow one this summer and later noticed it was labelled 'Cannon' on both the 1:50k and the 1:25k OS maps



## Ha Ha, a Buzzard

It is a special moment when staying at Lowstern and gazing at the marvellous view to spot something unusual, a passing steam train, or some of the local wildlife. Your Editor has seen hares resting in a hollow beyond the left of the ha ha, a buzzard perched on a distant post beyond that spot, and of course the resident stoat and bats. This September our Treasurer, Marty Trasler, trumped all those by noticing a buzzard on the ha ha. With no time to get a camera, he grabbed his phone and managed a picture taken through the double-glazed window.



In November a few sheep found a way into the plantation and onto the lawn where they spent the morning giving it a trim.

## The International Union of Speleology Bureau Meeting (UIS) in Indonesia

The Union Internationale de Spéléologie voting members consist of a delegate from each member country and an elected UIS Bureau runs its affairs. UIS Bureau Meetings are held three or more times a year. The August one, in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, was attended by Adjunct Secretary Ged Campion who says *“I am proud to have been a member of UIS bureau for more than eleven years and volunteer to work as much practicable. All UIS bureau members pay their own unsubsidised expenses.”*



Besides Bureau Meetings, quadrennial General Assemblies are held at their International Congresses. The next will be held in Bello Horizonte, Brazil, in July 2025. Our own Andy Eavis will be there as a guest specialist giving a lecture entitled *“The Largest Caves in the World”*. Andy is both a past president of the UIS, and the UK vice delegate.



On the photo (from left to right) are Johannes Mattes (Secretary.General, Austria), Jose Maria Califorra (Spain), Ged Campion, Zdenek Motycka (Czech Republic), Nadja Zupan Hajna (President, Slovenia), Nivaldo Colzato (Vice President, Brazil), Mladen Garasic (Croatia), Mario Parise (Italy), and Marc Mentens (Philippines).

The UIS bureau tackles issues of cave and karst conservation, the ethics of expeditions, and links with national groups. The UIS deals with issues such as soil and ground water pollution, and mining and quarrying’s effects on limestone landscapes and the caves beneath. It also provides grants for caving expeditions, research, and speleological events.

## Hidden Earth 2024

The much anticipated annual ‘Cavers Get Together’ was held this September in the Llangollen. The Club’s John Middleton, Harvey Lomas and Ged Campion were all there.

The large Pavilion has trade stands, club stands, photo and video competitions, a bar and café and most important of all, three lecture theatres running in parallel. More than forty lectures were given during the two days event covering a wide range of speleological subjects.

Expedition lectures included Matienzo – in its 65<sup>th</sup> year; Meghalaya – now with 551km of surveyed passageway; Pico del Oro Plateau, Northern Peru – underlain with 2,800m of limestone; Totes Gebirge – Austria, new exploration; Kenya – lava caves around Silali Volcano; Slovenia – 30 years of exploration; The Dachstein – 30 years of exploration; Philippines – new exploration in adventurous countryside; Crete – a resurvey of Gourgouthakas; Picos – the Ario caves now plumbed almost to -1,000m; a Mulu update; Brazil and the International Congress; Germany and its sulphate caves.

Nearer to home were more new explorations, cave surveying, cave rescue, archaeology, caving politics, karst and hydrology and the history of the underground exploration magazine, *Descent* since 1969.

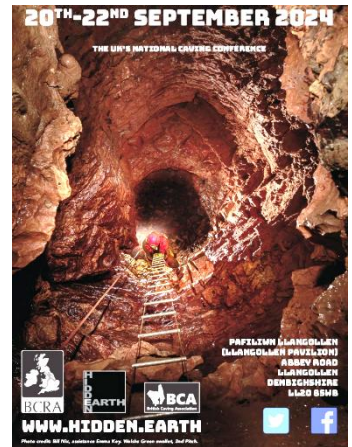
The conference is a great place to meet old friends and catch up with future plans with the help of the Conference Dinner and Disco Stomp. This was by far and away the finest gathering of cavers that John had attended in the past twenty years. (JM)

### Alpine Club and Wayfarers’ Club Dinners

The Alpine Club’s 154<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner was held in Kendal’s Castle Green Hotel. Ged Campion attended on behalf of the YRC rubbing shoulders with their President, Simon Richardson and Tom Livingstone described by Chris Bonnington as ‘One of the best climbers in the world, always using the purest techniques.’ In 2019 Tom received the Piolet d’Or award for his ascent of Latok 1 by the north ridge. A current issue for the AC is the difficulties in increasing the use of their George Starkey hut in Patterdale. They have made some progress in recruiting younger members.



Over at the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel, the same night, Membership Secretary Helen Smith was at the Wayfarers’ Club’s 117<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner. Their new President is Stuart Hesketh. Helen discussed reducing BMC subscriptions for inactive members with The Climbers’ Club President, Paul Drew, and The Fell & Rock Climbing Club’s Hazel Jonas. Friday’s heavy snowfall melted causing flooding and difficulties leaving Langdale.



# John Colton 1948-2024

Member 1988-2024



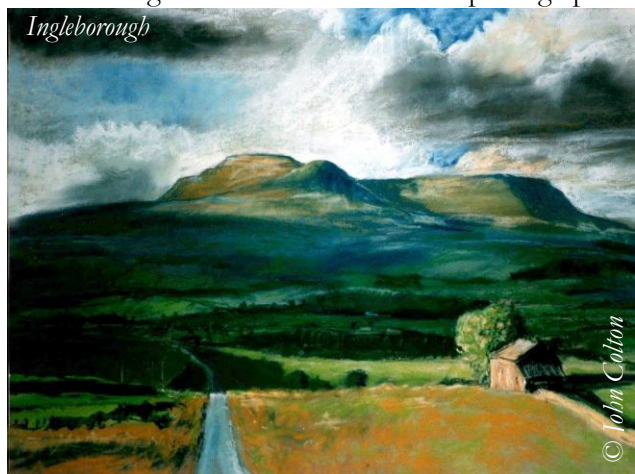
A baby-boomer born on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 1948 into a Bell Busk family, John Colton has things in common with our prominent early member William Cecil Slingsby. Both lived in Bell Busk near Gargrave, enjoyed exploring the Craven's valleys and crags as youngsters, and went on to become Alpinists. Where John surpassed Cecil was in his ability to capture crag and mountain scenes of exhibition quality from sketches drawn in situ – this probably saved his life.

John moved into the Clapham stationmaster's house as a youngster when his father took up that post. There he grew from a child who enjoyed drawing into a restless teenager

before electricity reached the house. Lacking '*all mod cons*' perhaps, but he did have the freedom to roam the Dales. Walking, exploring, and fishing using his late grandfather's rod and tackle, he was taken poaching by signalman Rabbity Dick. He skinned whatever he caught for his mother to cook.

Out on his own aged about 15, he climbed a steep crag, probably Robin Proctor's Scar. His parents got to hear of this and persuaded a friend of theirs to take him to the Lakes so that he could learn the rudiments of safe climbing. He was hooked.

School-desk-bound, an outdoor life appealed so he left to become a forestry worker, living in a tent for a couple of years, but he developed a yen to be trained in art. Eventually, he was enrolled at Lancaster College of Art and Design and lived in student lodgings in Morecambe, initially homesick for the outdoor life. His rock climbing around this time included putting up a HVS at Whitwick Quarry protected by a single peg. Qualifying from Loughborough Art College, he took a teaching post, attracted by the long holidays. He spent these in wild country places carrying his 1952 Leica camera which he used throughout the rest of his life. Later he taught in Brighouse and Halifax for many years until retirement, but it was his climbing which came first. For some years, he organised an annual camp up by Dow Crag's Goat's Water for pupils with behavioural difficulties.





John's alpine climbing started at the age of twenty around Chamonix – a quieter place in the '60s. He climbed so many classic routes: Walker and Frendo Spurs, North Face of the Dru, Peutery Ridge, Rochfort ridge and Dent du Geant solo, The Old Man of Hoy and Gogarth's Moon being among his most memorable. In his thirtieth year, he spent a winter month near Everest where he walked 400 miles and climbed 72,000ft. He had difficulty holding the brush when painting because of the cold.

As John put it. *“Drawing the hills has added another dimension to my mountaineering life, enriching it considerably by extending dialogue, contact and friendship with a diverse collection of people.”* His sketches and paintings were sought after. In the early days he would park by Stanage, drawing and selling sketches and paintings. However, he found French appreciated artists' efforts much more than the English and were more likely to buy his art. Displaying his work around Chamonix's bars he'd sell a drawing or two to buy a climbing jacket or a meal for the team.

Once, when climbing his small sketchbook saved his life when a stone hit him, punching through five of its thick pages but not going through to his spine.

With the YRC, I recall John was on the 1987 alpine meet at Sass Grund with Steve Goulden. He was also on *'Talisker'*, Ian Crowther's boat, when they attempted to sail out to a meet at Loch Coruisk, Skye, into the teeth of the Atlantic weather and ending up beaten back onto the Arisaig shoreline. As a Life Member, his recent contributions to the *'The Yorkshire Rambler'* include accounts of climbs in the Llanberis Pass, the Lake District, and on Robin Proctors' Scar, where it all started.

By 2013, aged 65, arthritis in his knees had curtailed his activity but he was still enjoying finding unspoilt places by alpine lakes. A member of the Alpine Club, he exhibited alpine scenes at Charlotte Road in 2023 under the tongue-in-cheek, understated title *'Over the Hill'*. Another exhibition was commissioned by the CAI and Courmayeur Mountain Guides in 2014.

John died aged 75 on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024 peacefully at home in Halifax, with his wife and three daughters, after a sixteen-month battle with pancreatic cancer. Arthur Salmon represented the Club at the funeral held at Park Wood Crematorium, Leeds. (MS)



# Tony Penny 1937-2024

## Member 2001-2024

Born in Cork, Ireland, on 26th June, 1937, Anthony was known as Tony to all except his mother, Ann. He has a sister Kay and brothers Cormac, Robert, and Samuel. Growing up in Cork, he did his early caving there, became a member of the Cork Speleological Society and often visited family and friends in the Middleton a little east of Cork city.

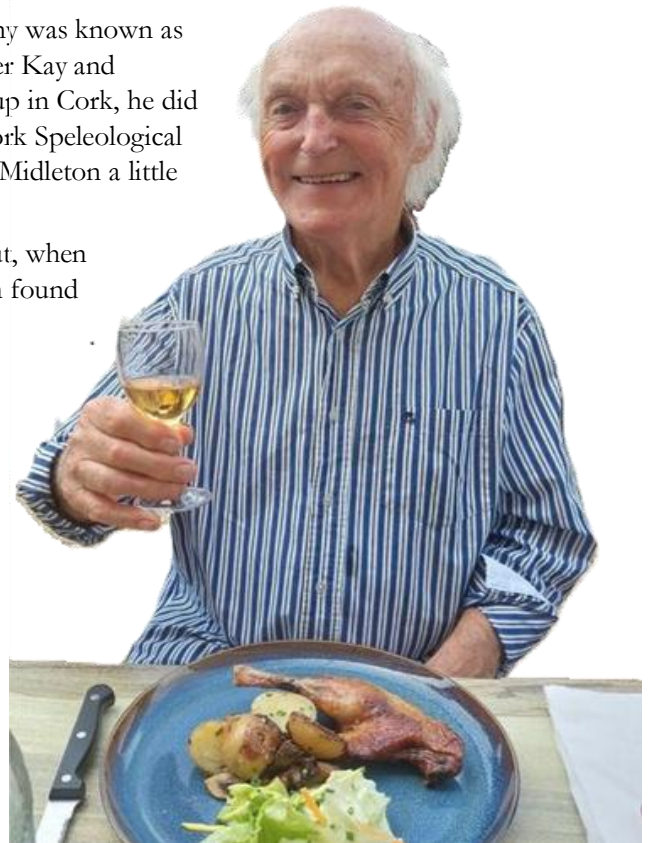
Cork had no caving clubs, as such, in the 1950s but, when Tony read about elk teeth and a gold-clad skeleton found in a cave just a few miles away, he persuaded two school friends to join him exploring caves. They had no directions to the cave so set out to search every entrance shaft and cavern that they came across.

Eventually, they progressed from bicycle lamps and balls of string to more sophisticated methods such as miners' lamps on helmets and wire ladders. Instead of seeking artefacts they started appreciating the formations. Events however, put a stop to Tony's expeditions as, due to the economic conditions at that time, his father decided to emigrate to England taking his family with him.

There in the Midlands, Tony became an engineer, working for Eaton Yale, Town, and others. Later he set himself up as a self-employed shop fitter working all over England for such household names as Specsavers, C&A, and Tesco. During this period, he married Mary and they had five children: Shaun (a YRC member since 1992), Mark, Kevin, Shivaun and Ann.

Meanwhile, he was still pursuing his passion of mountaineering and caving with the Wolverhampton Mountaineering Club and Wolverhampton Caving Group, caving extensively in South Wales, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Somerset. Some trips were with his brother Cormac who, on returning to Ireland to work, told him of the Cork Speleological Group and posted over newspaper reports of the club's exploits, Cormac featured in one of these when he accidentally set his hair alight with a carbide lamp whilst manoeuvring in a tight passage.

Tony explored caves in Fermanagh, wading through the Marble Arch Series where many years before the French caver Martel, had preceded him. This was during the time of the Irish "Troubles" and, on crossing the border, caving teams had to navigate through the obstacle course of sandbags and machine guns manned by the British Army. They were polite but curious when they discovered that the cavers' vehicles were carrying small metal ammunition boxes. These were, of course, empty to be used for carrying photographic gear and the like as the boxes were waterproof. It was all explained to the soldiers' satisfaction and they learned that usually only groups of fishermen, not cavers, ever came that way over the border.



Tony joined the YRC so that he could pursue his caving more widely. Now remarried, with his wife, Valerie, and the Wolverhampton and Yorkshire groups, he caved in Slovenia, Ireland, Spain, France, Austria, Germany, and China. He descended the Gouffre Berger near Grenoble, then the seventh deepest cave in the world, and the Gouffre Pierre Saint Martin which straddles the Spain-French border. To give an impression of these outings, the Gouffre Berger expedition took two weeks and the combined efforts of over thirty cavers to establish the two underground camps needed, hang the ropes in place to avoid twenty waterfalls and to cross an underground lake using a dinghy. Tony accidentally soloed that cave trying to catch up with another party who were in fact elsewhere.

Throughout, he also walked and climbed including Kilimanjaro, Mont Blanc, the Pennine Way, Shropshire Way, Coast to Coast and the Cotswold Way. In 1994, Tony and Valerie completed the Camino de Santiago. Cycling adventures followed in Ireland, France, and Spain.

Throughout his retirement, Tony remained active: winters in Spain, summers in France. He was often out with the Mojácar Walking Group and Los Tigres, an English-speaking caving group active in the extensive Sorbas caving area. In 2015, YRC members were well looked after by Los Tigres on a meet which Tony and Val organised there. The caving contrasted with the British norm, being warm, dry, and lined with crystalline gypsum. Tony enjoyed the YRC meets in Spain and in Ireland.



After a stroke in 2021, he was unable to be so active though he joined the local pool's AquaGym sessions. A further stroke in late 2023 required a prolonged stay in hospital where he caught flu which sapped his strength. Due to a loss of vision, he needed continual bedside support with such things as replacing his oxygen mask.

Back home, despite lacking speech, he made his needs known to his support team of carers and friends by sign language. On New Year's Eve, he received calls from Zambia, America, Canada, Finland, France, and Spain, besides those from the UK.

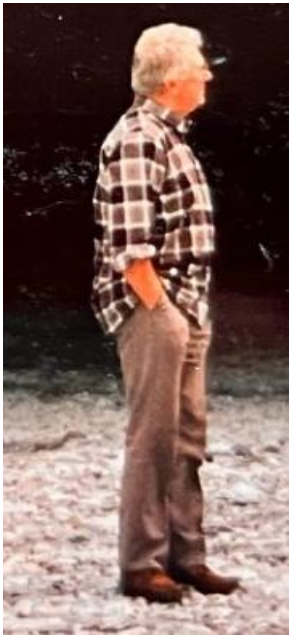
Tony died, aged 86, early on the 11<sup>th</sup> January in his home with Valerie and his dogs Bonita and Picasso by his side. A testament to his influence on so many people's lives is the over 500 messages of condolence received over the next few days. Valerie and he had been together since the day Elvis died, 16th August 1977.

Besides the funeral held in Mojácar on the 15th January, Tony's passing was marked by a Mass held at the Abbey of Saint Savin, France in May, an evening of folk music organised by Tony's lifelong friend, Jez Quinn, at Tony's favourite pub, The Barley Mow in Wolverhampton in June, and a gathering at their St Germain house. A further gathering at Lowstern is planned.

(VP-S)

# Roy Edward Pomfret 1933-2020

Member 1966-2020



Roy was born on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1933, and by the age of thirty he had become a keen mountaineer and was living in West Hartlepool. Most likely, his introduction to the YRC was through George Spenceley and the Outward Bound Schools. Roy joined the Club aged thirty-two.

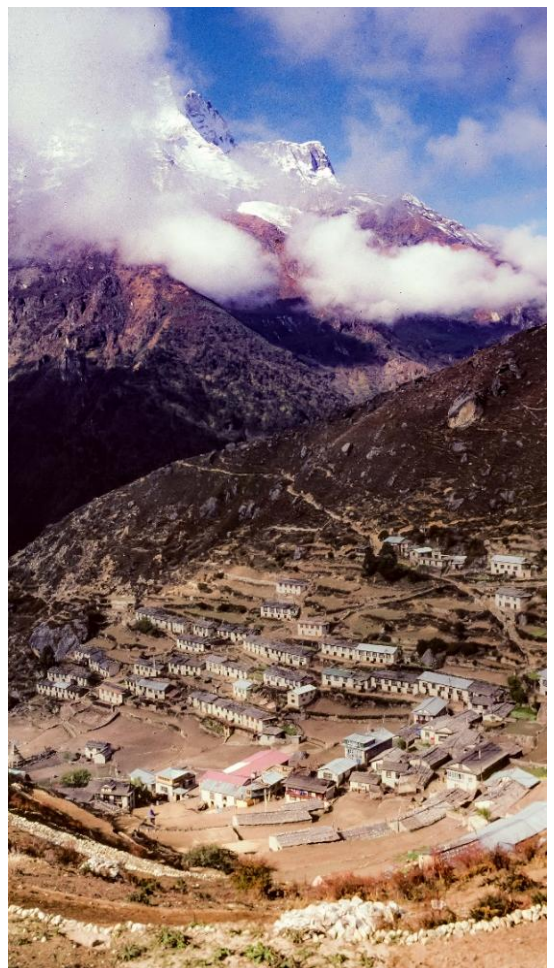
After working as an instructor at the Outward Bound School in Eskdale he ran Englethwaite Hall, an isolated place in the Eden Valley, looking after wayward lads. Roy's reassuringly calm authority helped him establish good relations with the surrounding farmers. So, when lads made a bid for freedom, those farmers would let Roy know which of the farm's outbuildings they were sheltering in, and Roy drove over to bring the youngsters back for a welcome meal. That same assurance saw Roy coopted onto the YRC Committee early this century.

In April 1983, Alan Kay had ascended too quickly from Lukla and as a result had a particularly bad headache. Wandering round Namche, getting a bit of fresh air, and looking to buy a better down jacket, Alan met Roy in Namche Bazaar by chance. Neither knew the

other was in Nepal. Both were somewhat surprised. Roy had been up to Everest Base Camp, and was on his way down to Lukla. During the ensuing conversation, Roy commented on the toughness of yak meat, something with which Alan himself soon became familiar.

In our centenary year, Roy joined the Norwegian meet, tackling Slingsby's peaks, along with his son, Neil, who became a member of the Club the following year. They were in the challenging Lofoten group whose first outing was a mass assault of The Leva (640m). Its sodden towering rock face coated in barely-attached moss caused those who valued their lives, including Roy, to retreat, leaving four to continue and descend using a free-hanging abseil only to discover an easier route round the side.

In 1995, Roy was on the Inchnadamph Whit meet, and supported on the Reivers' Ramble two-day Long Walk. That autumn, he trekked as part of the Club's 1995 Jugal Himal expedition. On the last day when the climbers and trekkers were



*Namche Bazaar, 1983*

together, walking up to camp at Panch Pokhar's five lakes (4465m), Roy had been puffing and panting up every slope. Rory, the expedition doctor, diagnosed bronchitis and gave him a course of antibiotics which soon cured him. Roy finished off that busy year with the Christmas meet at Blencathra. He was on the next Christmas meet at Goat Gap and Cliff Large's Easter meet at Crianlaraich in 1997. An entertaining dinner companion, he was a regular on Lake District and Scottish meets.

His practical understanding of the social sciences laced an exceptionally cold 1998 Scottish February week with conversations introducing Derek Smithson to the idea that it is guilt which moderates society, keeping things on an even keel. Being an engineer Derek was sceptical of the 'soft' sciences such as psychology and sociology. But discussing the matter kept us going as we tramped through the deep snows of Glen Roy's parallel roads, Anochs Mòr and Beag, the Grey Corries and Creag Meagaidh. We finished off that week attending the Club's Braemar meet.

Recently we lost contact with Roy. Enquiries were made among the Liberal Democrats in the Carlisle area as it was known that he had been active with them. A reply came from Michael Gee, who had been a pupil at the Outward Bound School in Eskdale, where Roy had later instructed. Through mountaineering he met Roy and later, in 2006, Roy recruited into the Liberal Democrats. It was through Michael that we learned of Roy's death. Michael is a Wayfarer and remembers 1990s RLH Joint meets with the YRC.

As evidenced by his educational and community political work, Roy had a strong sense of social responsibility. A further aspect of this was his directorship of Carlisle Environmental Action. This group sought to bring disused local sites and buildings back into community use, encourage conservation of public spaces, reduce existing pollution in such places, and raise public awareness of these matters.

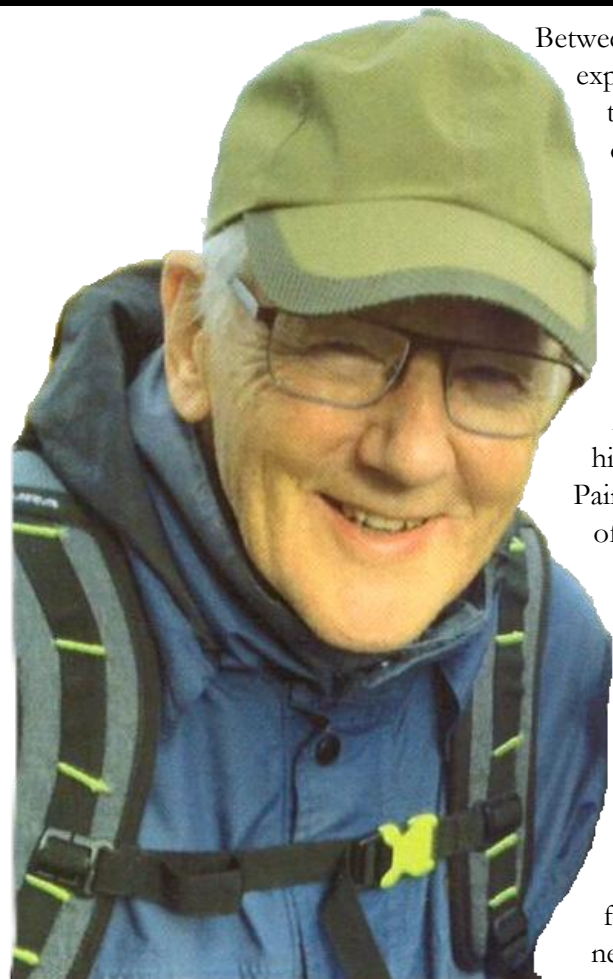
Some years ago, Roy was diagnosed with dementia from which he subsequently died. His funeral was private, for the family only. (MS)



*A planning meeting for the 1995 Jugal Himal trek, from the left: Albert Chapman, Ian Crowther, David Smith, Alan Kay, George Spenceley, Derek Bush and Roy Pomfret*

# Tony Smythe 1934-2024

Member 1986-2018



Between Frank Smythe's 1933 and 1936 Everest expeditions, his son Anthony George was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 1934. Though his father was often absent during Tony's childhood, like Frank, he became an author, an accomplished climber, and member of both the YRC and the Alpine Club (Tony via the elite ACG). The late '40s were a difficult time for Tony with the separation of his parents and then death of his father.

At school, aged 14, he visited Snowdonia with his brother, Richard, John Cleare and a master. Paired together, John and Tony made short work of their first VS. They hitch-hiked back there that summer, when Tony took (for him) a rare leader fall on Idwal's Holly Tree Wall.

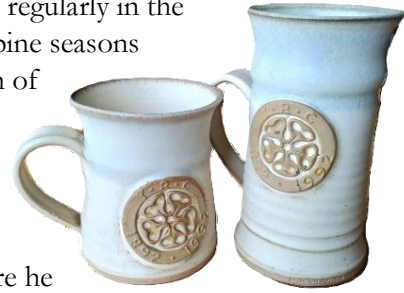
Luckily, they were using the recently introduced nylon ropes.

School also introduced him to flying through the ATC. In 1952 he joined the RAF, flying Meteor fighters, Canberra bombers, and Javelin delta-wing interceptors. Pushing his luck, Tony requested and got a 'training' jaunt following coastlines to Gibraltar and back the next day after an evening's partying.

Tony's professional writing started on leaving school, as a cub reporter with a Northampton newspaper. Encouraged by Geoffrey Winthrop Young, Tony wrote for Blackwoods Magazine His later publications were widely acknowledged: *Rock Climbers in Action in Snowdonia*, 1966, published jointly with his lifelong friend, John Cleare, was republished in 2016; while his perceptive and candid 2013 biography *My Father, Frank*, was nominated for the Boardman Tasker Award. Tony found the latter cathartic to write, but the required a series of promotional lectures and appearances were a trial for such a gentlemaned, reserved person.

Wherever he was living, he made trips onto the crags and into the mountains: the Peak District; the Pennines from north of England RAF bases; South America, Himalayas and Asia in the early years of his marriage; to watch sunrise on Mont Blanc while flying from a German airfield, Cornwall from Cambridge. Leaving the RAF meant he could focus on mountaineering, climbing and expeditions, all of which gave plenty of material for his lectures in schools and to various organisations.

Between 1956 and 1960, Tony and John ski toured and climbed regularly in the Alps including some of Frank's more famous routes. These alpine seasons advanced their skills and passion for the mountains. The depth of their appreciation of mountain experiences is evident in John's recollection of them marvelling at the Northern Lights one New Year from a snow hole atop The Ben while feasting on scotch and fried Christmas pudding.



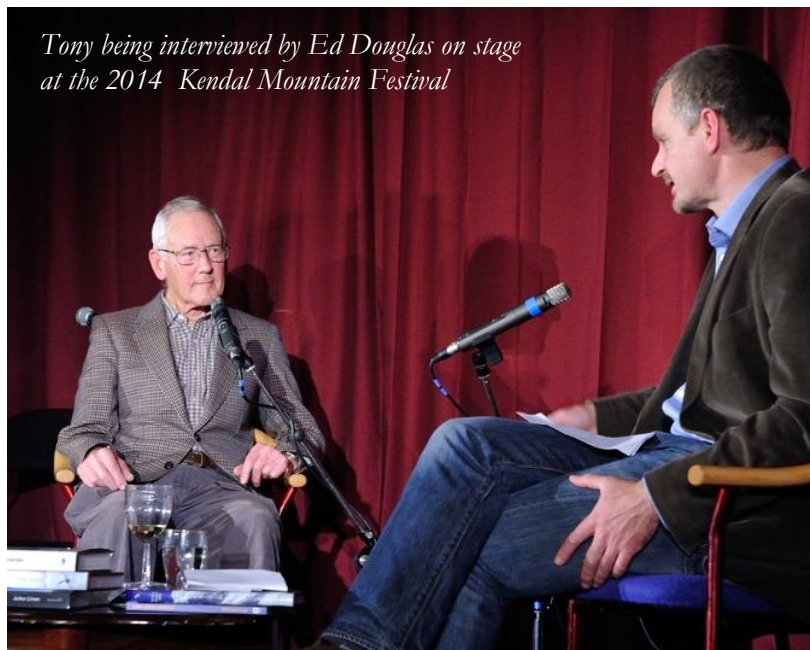
Marrying Sonia in 1964 they set up home in Oxfordshire. There he built on an enthusiasm developed while attending the Guilford School of Art, making hand-thrown pottery tableware on his workshop wheel. Albert Chapman later commissioned Tony to fashion commemorative mugs for the Club's centenary.

In the late '60s after an unfulfilling spell with Robert Lawrie, the specialist alpine and polar equipment supplier, Tony took off with Barry Biven on the perilous first continuous descent of the Yukon River in a small inflatable, taking time out to attempt Mount Hunter.

Later Sonia and Tony moved home to the Lake District's Staveley which provided more convenient opportunities for his paragliding and a base for tackling all the Munros. He became a compleator in 2005, half a century after ticking his first Munro.

While not a regular on YRC meets, Tony's appearances were memorable. Firstly, his vagabond appearance, in sandals and sporting an ancient faded-plum down jacket with snagged tears patched with tape or plasters. Then his taste for risky pursuits. Following a paraglider mishap, he arrived on Skye recovering from a broken collar bone. His unprepossessing demeanour masked a cool, calm confidence evident in the mountains. At the Roaches, Graham Salmon and a friend were assembling a land yacht and Tony was keen to give it a try. Unfortunately, I departed to climb before they were ready to roll but the bumpy field would have given a challenging course. On the 1998 Stubai meet, Tony persuaded David Smith to take a tandem paraglide – luckily no bones were broken.

By 2020, Tony's deteriorating physical health required a move into a care home, though his mind remained sharp. He died on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024 aged 89, only recently pre-deceased by Sonia. The Club were represented at Beetham Hall Crematorium on the 18<sup>th</sup> March when poems were read by three of his four grand-children and tributes spoken by his son Simon and daughter Anne. (MS)



*Tony being interviewed by Ed Douglas on stage at the 2014 Kendal Mountain Festival*

# Simon William Stemberge 1940-2024

Member 1958-2024



*A patriotic wartime Simon on his tricycle*

Simon and I were cousins living a mile apart on the outskirts of Huby, a village between the lower reaches of Wharfedale and Almscliff Crag. We grew up together during the Second World War, and as teenagers spent many days during the school holidays exploring the moors and dales beyond. Simon's Uncle Harry was President of the YRC from 1954-1956 followed by his father, Frank, from 1960-1962. So it was not surprising that Simon became a member in 1958, by which time we had already started to accompany our dads on YRC meets. However, having spent three years at a College of

Agriculture in Bedfordshire followed by two years seeking his fortune in the United States, his involvement in the YRC was relatively limited during that period.

Simon much preferred potholing to climbing. I recall leading him up a climb on Gimmer Crag in Langdale one New Year's Eve, when he arrived at the top complaining that he was cold-blooded and had no feeling remaining in his fingers. Underground exploration with the likes of Trevor Salmon and Ian Crowther were more his scene, but the expedition that I remember most was when Simon and I, accompanied by David Judson of the Craven Pothole Club, a fellow student of mine at Leeds School of Architecture at the time, found the classic traverse of Dowbergill Passage from Dow Cave to Alum Pot in the Yorkshire Dales to be a formidable task. Despite having reconnoitred what we considered to be a relatively straightforward first half of the pot the previous afternoon, we seemed to make slow progress. It must have taken us around eight hours in comparison to other parties who had recorded as little as four hours or as much as 13 on previous occasions due to the diversity of levels and underwater plunges required at certain locations. We had understood the route would become drier as we progressed, but were alarmed to hear running water as we neared the end, despite there being no forecast of heavy rain that evening. We eventually emerged at midnight, and despite being exhausted (having left word in Kettlewell that if we were not down by then the police should be informed) we ran all the way down to find the pub had not yet raised the alarm, and treated us with a very welcome pint.

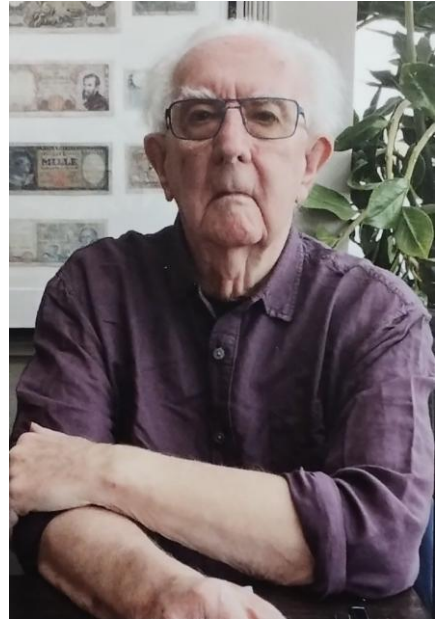


Another occasion on which Simon was involved with the YRC was when we joined his father on an Easter meet in Glen Lyon. Having ascended Schiehallion, we took the wrong path off the mountain in thick cloud and ended up crossing peat bogs and having to climb a ten-foot deer fence before wading an icy river and trudging the wearisome miles back to base. That night we heard that our Grannie was seriously ill and we had to return to Yorkshire, worried about her but truly thankful that we did not have to walk anywhere or climb anything that day.

Two or three years later, Simon and I joined Roger Ellis to spend a summer holiday camping in a field on the Channel Island of Sark, which we shared with a tethered bull, enjoyed swimming in the deep-sea inlets, and the duty-free drinks at the local hostelry – La Sablonnerie – who kindly gave us ‘tick’ when there was a boat strike that delayed our return to the UK. I suppose you might have called it a “mini YRC gathering.”

Simon was not only a cousin but a very good friend to me, and to many throughout his life. He leaves a wife Suzi; son Oliver and daughter Heidi; sister Janet & husband Sam and their two children.

(David Stenbridge)



Simon died peacefully at home on 12<sup>th</sup> October, aged 84 years having not been regularly active on meets since the 1960s. In those days he was one of the ‘incautious youth’ of the Club, allegedly traversing, in DJs, at third-floor level round Harrogate’s Majestic Hotel at one Annual Dinner after an evening’s drinking.

Some long-standing members have vivid memories of days out with Simon. Attending meets before joining the Club, Ian Crowther remembers Simon on meets when Frank Stenbridge was President. Trevor Salmon arrived at Simon’s 21<sup>st</sup> birthday celebration to find Simon had received a super new sports car. They were together on an early descent of Mungo Gill spending almost ten hours underground ([YRCJ 1960, p41-](#)). Together with John Lovett, in Easegill, they followed Slaughterhouse Drain and free climbed out of the normally laddered entrance. A 1959 trip in Lost John’s Cave required a swim under roof barriers to reach 1000ft of new rock passage leading to a mud bank and sump. With cousin David in Dowbergill Passage, to cope with squeezes they put all their carbide, food, candles and matches in tobacco tins (with airtight rubber seals) in their pockets. Clearly, Simon was an intrepid caver.

Simon’s life took many twists and turns. He kept sheep in the Dales and a New York hotel by Grand Central Station. He was a journalist for the Yorkshire Post. Invariably, through all life’s trials and tribulations his avowed response was to “Keep bugging on.”

Simon’s final visit to the Yorkshire Dales was last July. A celebration of his life was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November, at Elland, where the Club was represented by Michael Smith.



*Glen Etive  
Zongo*



*Totunheim*



2024

*Wasdale*



*Carneddau  
Anti Atlas*



*Conistone*



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## The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club

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