

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB ADVENTURES...AND MORE

SPRING 2025



*Alarmingly deep hole
Monkeyhead and Jellyfish
Unwelcome visitors
Navigation error
Snow and slippery leaves*



Happy New Year to you all.

Although Christmas and New Year are distant memories, as at the time of writing this we are less than a month off the clocks going forward.

This year is looking very promising with a welcome return to members getting more involved in organising trips at home and away.

At this time of year after a long winter we feel energised into getting stuck in to some long days outdoors with our pals.

Let's hope we can maintain that throughout the summer.

Just a final note. Although we do have themed weekends at the huts i.e. Cycling meet, fell race. Everyone is welcome, either join in or do your own thing and we'll all get together in the evening.

I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Tony

Cover photo-Dave Cundy climbing at
Bolulla-photo Nick Hepburn
Insert photo-Looking over Derwentwater-
photo Frances Watkins

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Hi everyone, and a Happy New Year to you all.

New Year seems a long time ago, and now Spring is here already! What a lovely prospect to look forward to some nice weather and getting out and about more. Let's hope we have some decent weather this year.

I have enjoyed reading about your adventures both planned and last minute-your tales are always interesting. Of course, they aren't always straightforward but that is all part of the fun! There are tales from above ground and underground and some great photos.

Unfortunately, more members have since passed on but there are some nice memories.

Anyway, I hope you enjoy reading this edition of your magazine, and thanks as always to those who contributed articles-much appreciated.

Christine



LADS AT THE LANGDALES—A FINE FEW DAYS

The Langdale Pikes from Great Carrs

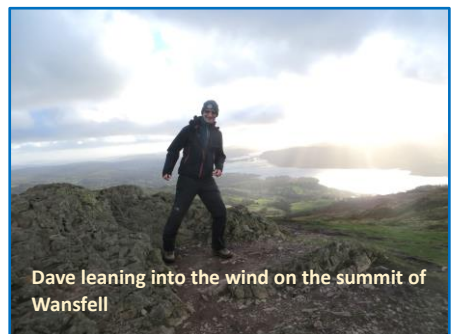
Impromptu Vintage Meet Little Langdale 24th – 28th November 2024

The forecast looked good for the week and I was free so suggested a few days walking in the Lakes. I emailed the usual suspects and an email was sent round the Club. Despite a good level of initial interest, only Dave Cundy and I made it, plus Steve Wrigley for a day. Various excuses were offered including a cold, too busy and the need to iron bed linen!

We arrived on Sunday evening to a cold hut so turned the heaters on. Monday was a bit cloudy and very windy but dry. We decided to walk up Wansfell which neither of us

Impromptu members-Andy Dunhill, Dave Cundy and Steve Wrigley for the day.

were sure whether we'd been up before. We parked in Ambleside and headed up Stock Gill falls onto the track, (was this the original road from Ambleside to Kirkstone Pass?) immediately taking the path directly to the top. It was very windy but we found shelter behind a drystone wall



Dave leaning into the wind on the summit of Wansfell

for a picnic. We then headed north east to the highest point at Baystones. We returned via Hundreds Road. The views were excellent and we stayed dry until shopping in Ambleside.

Steve arrived on Tuesday morning and we headed up to Greenside Mines then on to Great Carrs and Swirl How, passing the site of the WW2 plane crash. There was a very clear

rainbow above Blea Tarn. Again, it was very windy but then sheltered as we dropped off the summit of

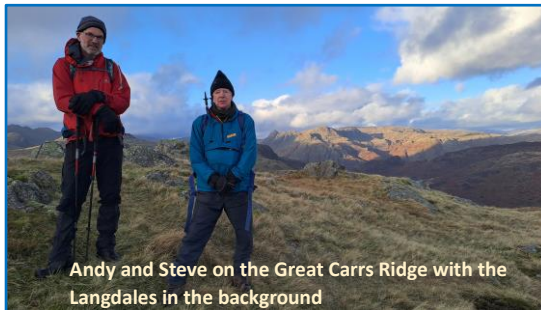
Swirl How. The walk down to Swirl Haws and up Wetherlam was fine, but the descent to the valley was a scramble down

greasy rock, a place to take care.

Steve decided to go for a swim in Rob's Hole at the end of the walk, something he does regularly!

Wednesday morning was a very frosty start, minus 6C. We decided to drive south to Black Combe near Millom. We parked at

Wicham Church & followed the main path up Moor Ghyll. It's a gentle walk with superb views to the south and west. The main fells had a cloud cover on the summits but we were in the sun all day. We headed north to see the view from the ridge of Blackcombe Screes then continued down to the west via Hallfoss Beck. Then



Andy and Steve on the Great Carrs Ridge with the Langdales in the background



Dave and Steve near the summit of Swirl How at the memorial to the plane that crashed



Steve swimming in Rob's Hole



followed a longer than expected walk around the base of the hill back to the car as the sun was setting.

Dave had a long drive home to Bristol so we went to the bouldering Wall in Kendal on Thursday morning. We were joined by Steve and Chris Campbell plus friend Eric from Penrith. This is a very good place for a workout.

All in all it was an active and excellent few days. The clear skies allowed Dave to set up his

astrophotography kit and hopefully he got some good stuff. He was photographing a mosaic of the Bubble and the Lobster Claw



nebulae. They're inside our galaxy, in the constellation of Cassiopeia. Or directly above the cottage, as viewed from the car park.

Andy



Unwelcome events on the Ladies Christmas meet

6th 7th December 2024

with Pat Bennett

Those sharing the Christmas spirit-
Liz Rawcliffe, Sue Denmark, Frances
Watkins, Mary Aspin and Pat Bennett

An unwelcome visitor barged uninvited to the Ladies Meet this year. It bellowed and blustered and rained on our parade. After an early morning Pilates session hosted by Frances to set us up for the day, we set off to walk on Saturday, but were sadly driven to seek shelter, blown into Lingholm tea shop by the storm, and forced under duress to eat bacon sandwiches and cakes. It whistled and howled, but, determined to hold fast, the Ladies saw off the intruder, who eventually slunk off to ruin someone else's day. Storm Darroch was



seen off by our stalwart Ladies who refused to be fazed by it and determined to have a good time in spite of it. After all, nothing could reduce the Ladies' capacity to meet and eat, natter and knit, chatter and



chime, jigsaw and jaw. Having put in our hearing aids, teeth and taken our medicaments, we feasted to excess on Saturday evening, although to one senior member's disgust, and another senior member's relief, we dispensed with the usual massacring of Christmas Carols.



A second unwelcome visitor had already inflicted itself on the cast of the Keswick Theatre by the Lake, for whose Christmas Production of the Jungle Book,



tickets had been purchased. Whatever dreaded lurgy it was laid low the performers and the show was cancelled. Oh yes it was! We shall never know who it was that succumbed. Was it Mowgli, overcome by the winter vomiting bug? Were Shere Khan or Baloo or Bagheera overcome by too much Christmas spirit? We shall never know.

Sunday mocked us by being dry and relatively calm, with a promise of early sunshine. Frances went a-turfing up hill, down vale and by lake. Well, it helps to be the youngest in the group. After one tuneless rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas, the rest of us prepared to leave, in various states of anticipation of the journeys ahead. Everyone reached home safely, the longest journey being to Edinburgh.

2025 will bring 4 x 75th birthdays and we look forward to a warmer and sunnier midsummer madness meet to celebrate (commiserate) our advanced years.

Pat



Is Yorkshire ready for Dave and Karen?



Karen and Dave's
Yorkshire adventure
16-22 September 2024

Having just completed the Cumbria Way with Karen it soon became obvious that she has the bug – [HELP!](#)

Within a couple of days after

arriving back from our 7 day walk Karen announced that we should do the Dales Way, “it’ll be dead easy” she says. I thought the weather might have come to my rescue, but

suddenly a few days of settled weather was forecast from the Monday to the Saturday. In fairness, I had done a fair amount of preparation just in case, which included getting some new boots and orthotics to sort out my very odd feet.

Day one

Welly Walk

I got the new boots on the Friday and at 6:30, on the following Monday we were on the train to Ilkley. I had been told to get used to the orthotics gradually, an hour on the first day, two on the second and so on. What could possibly go wrong?

After a brew at Ilkley station we set off to find the official start of the Dales Way which was somewhere down by the river. 10:20 we were there and off we went feeling really good in the

rare sunshine. The route follows the River Wharfe for the first three days and it was pretty well signposted. We did a little sightseeing whilst walking through Bolton Abbey where

the path becomes The Welly Walk with lots of stuff for the kids to do along the way (probably to distract them from the steep paths). We soon left the crowds and we were once again enjoying the tranquillity and sunshine. We

planned to do 12 miles today and camp near Appletreewick. We found our campsite – Masons Camping and were a little underwhelmed as it was £14 each, the most we paid in the Lakes was £10.

Very soon the tent was up, I snaffled a table and a couple of



Day one Setting off from Bolton Abbey



Has Karen become a Borrower?

chairs from the unoccupied posh plot next door so we could have a bit of comfort whilst we had a well-earned beer and our tea.

Day two

Navigation error

This took us up to Grassington which is a stunning village, and even though it was a Tuesday it was really busy. This was where we had our first navigation error, it is always the towns and villages that give me problems. The really annoying thing was I took us down the long steep hill to the river where I remembered we left the river at Grassington to go over the tops to get to Kettlewell. I muttered, mumbled and swore my way back up to the village centre to immediately spot the Dales Way sign (grrr). It was a lovely walk over the moorland but I was suffering from painful hips and knees so everything

felt such an effort. I put it down to the orthotics which are supposed to be correcting my posture, but I know I have rushed the breaking in bit and just have to hope all will improve. This bit was supposed to be five miles but it felt like fifty. It didn't help that there were lots and lots of wall siles, either big step-ups or narrow

slots or a mix of both. There was one every hundred yards for the last half mile and I was losing my sense of humour by the time we got to the campsite.

Kettlewell campsite is superb, bowling green flat, great showers and loos which are heated and roomy. Tent up,

shower and off to the pub for what turned out to be a super



pizza and cracking pint of Timothy Taylors, local cider for Karen. We had camped opposite the toilet/shower block so that we would have a dry space in the morning to repack the rucksacks. Although the weather was good during the day it was really cold at night and the tent was wet through with dew and condensation. This slowed us down in the morning as we tried to dry the tent off enough before setting off.

Day three

Sloping tent

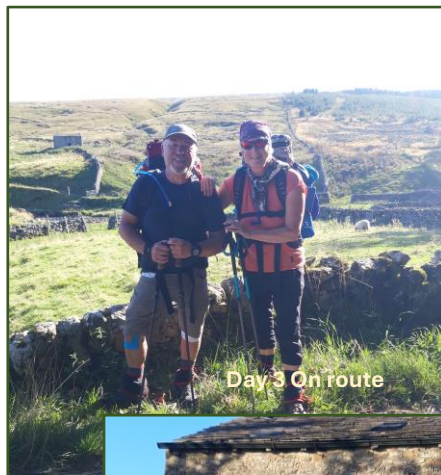
It was looking interesting as we would be following the Wharfe along Wharfedale and into Langstrothdale where the Wharfe ends. This was a lovely section passing through some interestingly name hamlets such as Hubberholme and

Yockenthwaite. The terrain was fairly flat for most of the way, thankfully, although I was starting to feel a lot better

today and the aches and pains were receding. The ground steepened for the last couple of miles towards Oughtershaw

but we were on the road now so it was not too bad. This was our third 12 mile day so we had paced ourselves well and we were

both feeling pretty good. Our stop tonight was at Nethergill Farm which we had found on the Dales Way official website. We were expecting pretty basic stuff as the write-up had



mentioned a barn with kettle and microwave. The barn turned out to be part of the main farmhouse building with a large seating area, loo and kitchen with some supplies using an honesty box system. The couple who run the place were lovely and even dug out a couple of ice-cold beers for us and six eggs from their rather domesticated chickens (all with names). The area at the front for the tent sloped which wasn't perfect, but we had a great night there and I managed to dry the tent off a little in the morning, and the place was warm and dry to get dressed, have brecky and pack.

Day four

We made a slightly earlier start, 8:30 as we had a bigger day of 16 miles and our hosts had told us that there were two pretty steep sections one after the other, and the ground would also be soft going. We made pretty



Day 4 Dale's Way joins the Pennine Way fingerpost



Dale's Way joins the Pennine Way

good progress; the going was a little muddy in places but not too bad. As we gently gained height, we were dreading the steep uphill

section, but after a while we were on the ridge and had joined the Pennine Way over Cam Fell and heading towards Ribbleshead. The bridleway was a little hard

underfoot but we managed to get a good rhythm going and made good progress and soon we met the Hawes road where we had a well-earned foot break. The weather was perfect, lovely sunshine with a nice breeze. We set off up the track towards Dent Head which was very steep at the start but it didn't last long and soon we were walking over rolling ground for a couple of miles until we met the tarmac road leading to Dent. There was a fair amount of road walking on this section which was a little disappointing. We had to walk all the way to Cowgill before we got off the road, and even after that there were long sections that were on minor roads which is ok for making good time, but it is a bit draining on the feet and the view isn't so good with hedgerows blocking it.

We finally came to Dent and were in time to get a few essentials from the shop before heading for the campsite. We were disappointed to see it was a Camping & Caravan Club site as we expected it to be expensive. Happy days, it was

£10 each, and the chap running it told us to pitch next to the gazebo that had a couple of picnic benches we could use for our cooking and gear store. Another freeze-dried meal for tea but, washed down with a beer each we'd picked up in the store. We were soon joined by John who had done the Dales Way a couple of weeks previously and enjoyed recounting his experiences. He gave us some advice that we thought made sense at the time, which was to finish the route doing three 10 mile days and enjoy being relaxed all the way. After another chilly night in the tent and a soggy tent wrap in the morning we decided to stick with plan A and finish in 2 days.

Day five

The Cow Whisperer

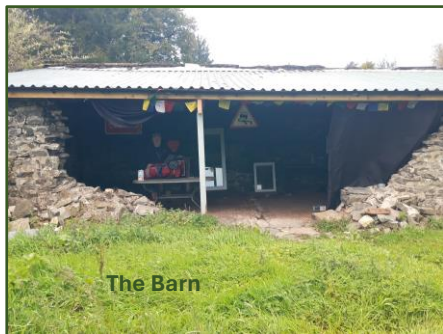
This was 15 miles and we were booked in at another farm with a barn so who knows it may be as good as the last one. We followed the River Dee towards Sedbergh where we planned to detour and get some grub for

the day. It was about five miles to Sedbergh and we were there late morning. We popped into the butchers and bought the best sausage roll I have ever tasted, and also a decent size pork pie for tomorrow's breakfast. I left Karen at a bench with the bags and went in search of the sandwich shop. It took forever to get served and have our butties made but eventually I got back to a not so patient Karen. The food was amazing but we must have lost at least an hour with the detour which made me feel a little under pressure regarding time as we were due at the farm for 5:00pm. Navigation wasn't straight forward on this leg and I got us into another detour (more time!). We got to the point where the path crosses the railway only to find it blocked by a herd of cows waiting to be milked. **(Good job I wasn't there!) (Ed)** They were in a small area accessed through a ridiculously small kissing gate so once in there was no quick way out. They were all stood in front of the gate leading to the bridge.

Karen had already nicknamed me the Cow Whisperer as we have already had a few cow moments. There was no other way so I climbed through/over the stile to join my new friends where I struck up a conversation with them as I made my way through them and towards the gate, with Karen sticking to me like glue. The last tough bit was keeping my new friends from following us through the gate.

Off we went across field after field (another "detour"). Time was really getting on now and we still had over two miles to go, so I asked Karen to ring our host and tell her we would be late. When describing where we were the lady said look out for a field with lots of bales of hay scattered around. We were in a field just like that. Karen said "there's some tee shirts and socks on the gate in front of me", "they're my son's" says our host, you're here. The address she'd put on the website was for the farm, this was at least 2 miles away but lady luck was looking down on us and we found it. There had

been a bit of a crisis on the farm so we were to be on our own, “make yourselves at home and help yourself to anything”. The grass in the field we were expected to camp in was

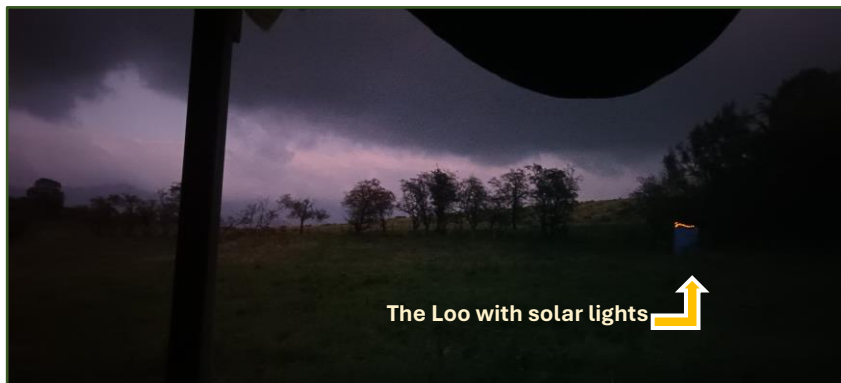


shin high full of nettles. The barn had no front on it, just Nepali prayer flags draped everywhere. There was a compost loo (4 poles and a tarpaulin) which lit up when it went dark as it had solar lights draped around it. There were two table and two settees, two arm chairs and four stand chairs, all covered with ****e so we did a bit of brushing off (no brush) and hunkered

down in there. There was no water or electricity but in a far corner I found a pack of 2litre bottles of water – life saver, it was the only thing we couldn’t do without. Last of the freeze dried meals for dinner followed by a triple choc cookie each that I had bought in Sedbergh. They were fantastic BUT, such a choc high neither of us could get to sleep. We didn’t bother putting the tent up, just crashed on the settees in our sleeping bags. A very surreal night we will remember forever.

Day 6

The day began without having to take a wet tent down so we got going a little earlier. The leg to Burneside seemed to go on forever, but when we did stop we had the pork pie from the butcher in Sedbergh, delicious.



We followed the river to Staveley and decided not to make the same mistake again

so didn't carry on to Wilf's Café as that would have cost us an hour at least.

The journey from Staveley to Bowness is possibly one of the prettiest legs, maybe because we love the Lakes so

much. The elation of reaching Bowness was marred a little by the place being absolutely mobbed. It was Saturday night but we could have been in Ibiza, it was awful. We hopped on a bus up to the train station, bought a ready meal in Booths and two hours from completing a super six day walk we were back home in Kirkham.

The Dales Way is 82 miles of mainly well signed paths through lovely scenery. There are places where it is easy to go wrong so it is important to pay attention to where you are all the time. The paths are easier

walking than the Cumbria Way and it is also easier to maintain a decent walking pace. It is a

good route to choose as a first long distance walk, as long as you do your homework and plan your overnight stops. As a final note, my boots came good in the end, and for the final three days yours truly was in

good shape. Karen also had her boot insoles changed after her Cumbria Way experience, and after advice from Whalley Warm and Dry (where I got my boots) her

feet were as good as new when we arrived home.



Last day, Dave pensive



Last day, Karen at Bowness

Dave



Peter Llewellyn

Peter, unfortunately died in November 2024 but here are some nice reminiscences.

From Mike Howe

As I was with three of Peter's oldest friends last week, we discussed his involvement with the club (and remembered him fondly with a toast).

No one seemed to know how he got involved, but I believe there was a connection between some FMC members (possibly Mick Tolley) and Red Rose Caving at Bull Pot Farm.

I shared many good days out with Peter and longer trips to Skye and Knoydart. My main recollections are that he was reluctant to give up even when his health held him back.

The most memorable day out we named "the day of the Flying Malt Loaf". I believe it was at Peter's suggestion that a party of eight embarked on a scramble up Link Cove onto Fairfield with the intention

of descending over St Sunday Crag. As the day worsened and the wind increased we took a break for a bite to eat. As Barrie Crook took his Malt Loaf from his rucksack the wind got hold of it and it was last seen heading across the valley. It became clear that we would not make it along the St Sunday ridge when one of the party was lifted bodily sideways by the wind. The rest were mostly lying prone on the path! We took a tricky line descending into Grisedale as the snow arrived. The first car made it up Kirkstone Pass with a little difficulty. The other car had more of a struggle and arrived at the pass with Andrew lying across the bonnet for extra grip, whilst the three pushers were left behind and had to walk up to the pass as the car got moving. We all made it home struggling down the M6 in heavy snow with the second car arriving about 1am. We all look back on it as “a good day out”!

Mike

From Barrie Crook

Myself and Christine together with Peter and Gillian visited The Pyrenees one summer many years ago. It was a quiet period and we arrived tired at a village Inn we expected to stay. Unfortunately, Lou Reed was performing in the next valley so the Inn was full. I was for sleeping outside but Gillian with her Yorkshire determination thought otherwise and she found another smaller Inn where we could stay the night. Our hostess was a young lady about 20 years old but with a head of 40 on her!

This was my introduction to Elisabeth, a Norwegian/Catalan friend who ever since I now spend Christmases with in Oslo!

John and myself were on an FMC Meet. We were sat on the floor of a many-years-closed ore mine somewhere in the North East. It was completely dark.

Peter had led two of our ladies, Mary and Jennie, further into the mine. We were waiting for their return, we waited, we waited. At last, they returned, thank Heaven for Peter.

Otherwise, all very pleasant memories of Peter.

Barry

From John Wiseman

As well as being a prominent member of Red Rose Caving Club, Peter was part of a mining group that explored disused mines. For several years he led a "Mining Meet" that was on the FMC syllabus. On the trip Barrie recounts Peter had led us underground near Alston, stopping often to tell us how the mine developed and the techniques used to extract the lead ore. It was fascinating. That night in a pub raffle Mary Aspin won a large bunch of onions. The following day we went down a different mine, one that had large caverns, a different geology and a nice contrast to Saturday's trip.

On one FMC Corris meet, at the end of a day's walk, he led some of us through an old slate mine. We went through the mountain from one valley to the next on a service tunnel, but we could periodically see the workings to one side and above and below us.

John

From John and June Wiseman

We have had many good days out walking with Peter and Gillian, all bring back memories, from watching bombs explode before we set off from Cape Wrath to Sandwood Bay, to sitting in the sun on top of a mountain on Mull watching an eagle soar overhead soon be a dot in the distance....

On another occasion we were eating our breakfast when Peter appeared bared his belly and asked us to remove a blood sucking tick that had taken up residence in his belly button.

John and June

A GRAND TIME IN GRENOBLE

DECEMBER 2024

WITH KELLY CARTMELL



Feeling the sadness of leaving El Chorro, Malaga after some rather tropical (38 degree) climbs and trail runs in September, myself and Nick (the runner Nick, not the other one) almost missed our flight home for no other reason than we didn't want to leave Malaga, but did hastily find ourselves trawling through Skyscanner for our next adventure. Grenoble flights and airport parking for £50, with a quick google noting they had Christmas markets on, it was done, flights booked and the 2 month count down was on.



We leisurely booked a hotel, and the couple of days before thought we probably should have a look what this little town had to offer, (other than being an airport to fly into to get to the Alps). We had a long weekend to fill and no real

plans (other than cheese and Christmas markets).

We fell in love with this quirky yet sleepy, not so little town very quickly. Its winding streets, endless patisseries and chocolatiers were a welcome break from the humdrum of life back home.



We spent a day doing a run around town, down the river, round the local parks, even managed a spot of climbing, a few churches and the quirkiest old car park that we had to squeeze past security to run around in. We spent far too

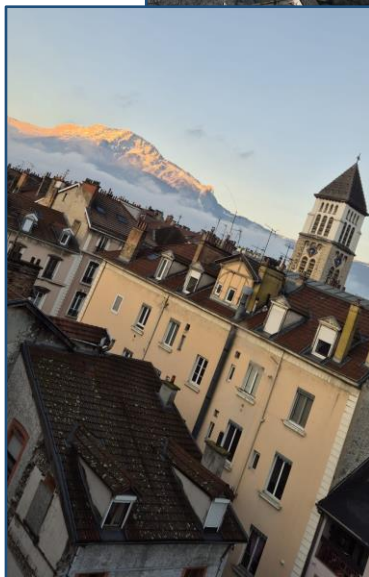
long in the biggest outdoor shop either of us have ever been in, and dragged our croissant filled bodies round 15km of Grenoble before adding all the cheese and red wine to the croissant mix.

Our biggest day was a run up to the bastille ruins, but not before taking in a derelict building covered floor to ceiling in graffiti (much like the rest of the town). We



managed to get 2 new peaks (Mont Jalla 625m and Mont Rachais 1046m) and ran amongst the clouds, snow

and slippery leaves. The views over the town were beautiful and views of neighbouring mountains left us already planning a trip back! Grenoble, for £50, it was nothing but a treat!



KELLY

Tight rifts and a narrow crawl on the 2023 Caving Season

With Steve Clarke

Dan, Jack and Al B, Short
Drop traverse into Gavel Pot



In the new year, we took new intro member Jack Cardwell to the excellent SRT facility at the YSS (Yorkshire Subterranean Society) at Helwith Bridge for an afternoon of SRT familiarisation. Jack joined us the following week for an evening trip to do the Short Drop – Gavel traverse. Dan led Jack with Al B with a pull-through on the pitch, whilst Steve C headed to Gavel to rig the exit rope. 10ft of visibility in the fog on the fell with a diminishing battery on the GPS, it was a relief to find the fence that surrounds the Gavel Pot shakehole.

Fog and drizzle were the theme again in February. Steve C & Craig planned to go to Jingling Pot, Kingsdale, but the thoroughly miserable conditions on the fell resulted in a diversion to Notts 2 on Leck Fell. Moving quickly,



Steve C, Notts 2 Main Streamway beyond Curry Junction

we carried the camera gear in two boxes to get some shots in the main streamway beyond curry junction. Out in time for beers in the Kirkby Lonsdale Brewery.

March saw us trudging up the



Après at the KL Brewery

Kingsdale Fell side to Jingling Pot. Guest appearance from Imogen, a fellow outdoor instructor working with Dan, for her first SRT trip. We

started quite late so had to get a shift on. Steve C rigged, with Craig following with bag 2. Dan showed Imogen the ropes and she quickly got the idea making short work of the traverse and jugging up the 5 pitches of the Lateral Cleft route. Back on the surface with plenty of time to the call-out, we realised we'd left one of the flashguns down the hole. Dan wasn't quick enough removing his SRT gear so he was nominated to re-rig the

entrance pitch to retrieve it. We missed the pub.

We finished off the winter 'season' with weekend trips to Death's Head Hole & Shuttleworth Pot. We reported the rotten tree belay at Death's Head, promoting a really prompt response from the CNCC. With a couple of weeks they have installed new belay stakes, performed some surgery on the tree



Imogen on the Jingling Traverse



Dan, Deaths Head Hole

and installed additional resin bolts to improve the redundancy on the main hang.

Shuttleworth Pot was a superb weekend trip with Steve C, Craig & Dan using this excavated shaft to access Witches II cave, previously only accessible by cave divers. Excellent formations and atmospheric deep sumps heading



Craig, House of the Rising Sump, Witches 11

with re-belays and an awkward sideways crawl to gain the top of the main 40m pitch. Dan & Connor descended the main pitch, whilst Steve dangled and took photos of the alarmingly deep hole! Exit took a while,

off into the major underwater drainage routes from Leck Fell and beyond.

multiple re-belays and tangles de-

Final trip before we reverted to cragging was a wet descent of Aquamole Pot, where we were joined by another instructor from Dan's



Dan. Main pitch, Aquamole Pot

outdoor centre – Connor. As a team of three, it took some effort to get enough rope and two boxes of camera gear down multiple pitches

rigging around the in-situ ropes.

Over the summer we organised a couple of 'pull-through' trips to the

sporting pots of West Kingsdale.
First tackled was Swinsto Hole.
Steve, Dan & Craig. This starts with a narrow crawl to a shot pitch. Immediately committed once we had pulled the rope down, we then tackled the 250m Swinsto Long Crawl. Twenty minutes double-kneepads helped a lot. A series of wet pitches and interesting cascades landed us in the Great Aven. We only lost one rope in the

Entrance with a few minutes to spare.

The second pull-through trip was to Simpson Pot, with Nikie, Steve, Dan, Ben & Craig. Similar in style to Swinsto, this substitutes the long crawl with a full wetting in the blasted hole duck. Craig tackled this with style and grace. A dozen short pitches, with numerous awkward and tight rifts that left the outcome

in doubt for the larger members of the team. None of us could easily fit through the Slit Pot pitch-head



Dan entering Swinsto Hole

process (subsequently recovered by another team – thank you!). By the time we made it through East Entrance passage and into the Kingsdale Master cave we were running short on time for our call-out and made a rushed exit up the pitch and through the Roof Tunnel, exiting at Valley



Evening Sun above the Turbary Road, en route to Simpson Pot (by Nikie Arthurs)

we climbed over to the head of Slit Pot and descended the full 35m pitch. Again, we made our way through Kingsdale Master cave to exit at Valley Entrance.

Final trip of 2023 was to Bull Pot, Kingsdale, with Nick, Dan, Steve, Neil & Will. Bull Pot is a vertical pothole between Rowten and Yordas. A series of increasingly technical pitches, we stopped short of the 4th pitch due to the narrow

pitch head and running a bit short on time

FMC run regular caving trips over the winter months, trips of all different kinds to suit conditions and the abilities of whoever wants to come along on the night. We now have some club over-suits to hire for a small charge for anyone who wants to try caving. Contact Steve Clark or Dan Ellis to get involved

Steve

Email articles to -:

chris.paddy61@gmail.com or magazine@fyldemc.org

Any feedback is welcome-good or not so good.

The FMC are members of Friends of the Lake District and The Snowdonia Society so why not check them out at:-

www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk

www.snowdonia-society.org.uk

Dave Sharples RIP – a few memories

Dave joined the **FMC** in the mid-**1960's** and remained a member until his recent death.

Andy Dunhill

When Paul Clarke & I first joined the Club via the Junior section, Dave was a key part of the active group. He took us both under his wing and we spent many happy weekends in the lakes, having been driven up usually by Dave Earle or John and June. His enthusiasm for climbing and life generally was infectious. His life changing accident made him a slow climber, and no one could understand how he was able to remain in a very strenuous position on a climb for so long, he was as strong as an Ox. I remember trying lagoon on Heron Crag, Eskdale with him on several occasions. On one attempt he fell off leading and as we only used a waist belay then it was a major challenge holding him. We never managed to do lagoon and sadly we won't do now.

In the mid-1970s he got married and I moved away to Polytechnic so our paths diverged. However, he always came to the Club dinner where we had a chat and reminisced about past climbing exploits. Dave's grin was infectious and he was regarded with great affection by all that knew him.

Andy

Paul Clarke

On one trip to Scotland in the early 1970s, when in Fort William, he introduced us to Ian Nicholson a well-known member of the Craig Dubh. For those not in the know, Ian had a massive reputation at the time since he had speedily soloed Zero and Point Five gullies, both feared routes. After a short chat it was agreed that we would spend the night in his flat. In lieu of rent, we would provide the

evening meal. Dave volunteered to make a curry for us allNow Dave's famous 'North Wall Curries' were something that you approached with fear and trepidation (and a big cold drink - preferably alcoholic). We all survived and climbed the next day. Under Dave's guidance the culinary arts practiced in the Little Langdale and Stair kitchens definitely took a turn for the extreme and invariably had consequences that need not be described here.

Paul

Martin Dale

Dave Sharples will always live long in my memory because it was he who took me up my first ever rock climbs. On a sunny crisp day in March 1971 a few of us Club Juniors gathered at the foot of Lower Scout Crag in Great Langdale to have a go at rock climbing. Dave was one of several Senior members present. There were lots of mickey taking going on if I remember rightly, and a lot directed at Dave who sported his new Plum coloured duvet, which he proceeded to climb in!

Dave was a man of few words but I remember that if you asked for a tight rope, one duly arrived and you usually got pulled upwards off the rock by his great strength. Later that evening, it was Dave who attempted to carry me down the lane at Little Langdale, kicking and screaming, to dump me in the ford (an initiation tradition that has thankfully long gone). Thankfully it was raining and he encountered puddles so didn't make it!

I didn't climb with Dave that often, but when I did his great strength was his biggest asset. Easier climbs tended to confuse him. Too many holds! He was much better on steeper harder blanker climbs. I was amazed to hear, having just done Kelly's Overhang on Stanage, that Dave had spent all day hanging from the crux trying to work it out! Dave was always at the club dinner. He only missed a few later on when his health deteriorated. He always loved to recount tales of what he had been up to during the year, and it was always impressive stuff.

Dave was a great club character and he will definitely go down in club folklore!

Martin

A PROPER DAY OUT-Peter H Roscoe

As the coach dropped a small group of “climbers” off at Bridge End, and then made its way towards Patterdale, the Meet Leader’s request “give these two a proper day out” was made clear.

The group made our way up to the easy angled Patterdale slabs, where the two Davids (Sharples and Morris) quickly showed a natural aptitude and pleasure in rock climbing and had soon ticked off all that the slabs had to offer.

My suggestion that a bit of walking would help satisfy the meet leader’s request met with agreement from the Davids and off we set.

We soon rattled off Coffa Pike, the edge of Fairfield and down to Grizedale Tarn and then a steady plod to Dollywaggon and the all-round views from the top of Helvellyn.

The clock was ticking away so we made a remarkably fast traverse of Striding Edge and the long descent back to the coach at Patterdale arriving more than an hour later than the appointed time.

The irate Meet Leader was pacified a little when I reminded him that I had done my best to meet with his instructions, and I soon fell asleep for the rest of the journey back to Blackpool.

Happy memories of David Sharples and David Morris.

Pete Roscoe

climbing and Constellations in Calpe

With Dave Cundy

How Times Change.....

Climbers-Andy Dunhill and friend
Eric McKenna Parker, Dave Cundy
and Nick Hepburn

I was feeling bit restless in the Spring and so when Andy Dunhill and Nick Hepburn called me about going to Calpe, I jumped at the opportunity. That might surprise a

few of you since I have never been the greatest lover of sport climbing. However, I did have a second reason to go. Clouds. It had been particularly cloudy in the UK since

Andy climbing at Guadalest

last summer, so I hadn't had many opportunities to do some astro-photography. As the weather forecast was good, Andy's suggestion of going to Calp provided the opportunity to scratch two itches at once.

The Daytime Activities...

Arriving at our Airbnb in Maryvillas, we casually chucked our guidebooks onto the coffee table. We all gasped in surprise..... I gasped because Andy and Nick had handfuls of the latest guides, full of places I'd never heard of. They gasped because I produced my 'new' Chris Craggs 1995 guide with black and white hand-drawn topos. "Oh dear – it has been a long time...". Nick reckoned that whole new mountain ranges had formed since my guide had been written.

Being the nominated driver for the holiday, I couldn't help but notice the changes since I'd last been (round about the Millenium). The first crag I'd visited back in '87 (Toix West) was now just twenty yards from a housing estate. The hillside of another of the early crags (Dalle D'ola) now sported not only a housing estate but a full-bore Russian orthodox church! Woody always said the place was full of Russian money. Quod erat demonstrandum!

Some things hadn't changed though. I tried to get Nick and Andy interested in a climb on the Puig

Campana but they weren't biting. Ditto the Penon. Something big like that is what I call an adventure but they tried to convince me that it wouldn't live up to my expectations. May be one day...

We were fortunate to have a friend of Andy's, Eric McKenna-Parker, join us for the first week, so that made the climbing a bit more efficient and made things even more sociable.

The climbing areas were quite strung out, so we were typically driving an hour to the crag each day. The furthest was Tallat Roig, between Gandia and Valencia. It was blistering hot that day, so we were fortunate that an undercut part



of the crag provided some vital shade for lunch.

We went to several crags twice (Bolulla, Guadalest and Cabeconet) and also had a pleasant day on the coast at Ambolo (just north of Calp), with a couple of pitches being really good. Guadalest was a particularly

attractive tower of rock with some kind of walled monastery perched on top at one end. We knocked off some excellent routes there which were steep but juggy. At 30-35m long, they were quite tiring in the heat.

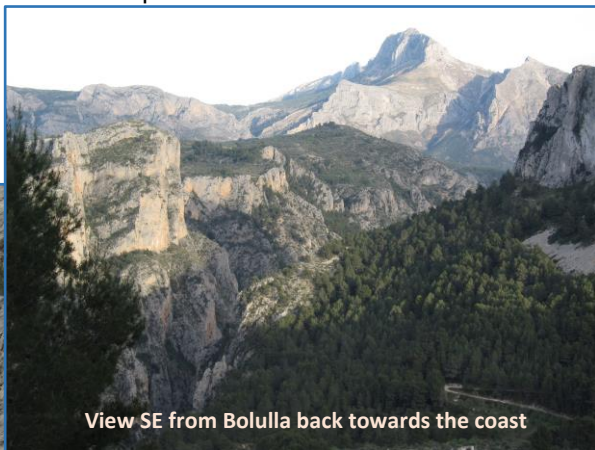
Other crags of note included Garx (near Bolulla), which you approach down through a very pretty cherry orchard. In the usual tradition, we spent an hour or two hunting for Garx

It took a quite few attempts before fully committing ourselves. Hats off to Nick who seemed a little more 'resistant' to conditions than Andy and myself.

The crag at El Xaqueto, forty minutes inland from Alicante, promised some shade for our last



Climbing at Bolulla



View SE from Bolulla back towards the coast



Andy and Dave

on the wrong road because the map wasn't very clear (Honest Guv...)

On our rest days, we did try to cleanse our souls in the Mediterranean but the sea temperature was absolutely *baltic*.

day (also hot) but proved to be a very small crag with patches of questionable rock and equipped with bolts that looked like they'd been there since the sixties. The team

consensus was 'highly disappointing'. Its only real point of note was its paraglider take-off area which was which was decked out with artificial grass-only the random white lines gave away its heritage as a former artificial sports pitch. Although nice take off facing the sea, it would be a lucky pilot who went cross-country from there before the sea breeze arrived.



The Night-time Activities...

Although Calp was never going to be a Dark Sky Reserve (its skies being only slightly darker than mine in Bristol), it was blessed with

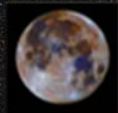
considerably better weather. In the evenings, while Andy was heating up dinner, I set up my photography kit on the patio of the house where we stayed (motorised mount, telescope, camera, mini-computer and batteries). It usually took an hour to find my target, get focussed, take test shots and set a sequence going. At which point Dinner was ready. Thanks Andy!

Ironically, I tried up at Toix summit (too much travel faff) and down at Maryvillas harbour (too many yobos) before realising that the best spot was, literally, my doorstep.

I had just one target for the holiday, a small region in the constellation of Gemini, illustrating events at the beginning and end of a star's life :

- The '**monkeyhead**' nebula – a cloud of hydrogen illuminated by new stars being formed within it.
- The '**jellyfish**' nebula – the remnants of a supernova (a massive star that ran out
- of fuel for nuclear fusion, collapsed in on itself and then exploded).

A previous effort to image the jellyfish the year before yielded a miserable result, so I resolved to try and get at least 10 hours of exposure in order to bring out the details. That equated to 200 three-minute exposures which would be stacked together and post-processed (to enhance the details). As the nebulae disappeared into the



The Moon,
shown to scale

Stars forming in the
'monkeyhead' nebula

A supernova remnant
called the 'jellyfish'

light pollution
above Maryvillas
barely two hours
after darkness, I
was only able to
image for an
hour or two or
two a night.
Fortunately, the
weather played
ball and virtually
every night was
a cracker.

And this is
the result of
those ten
hours....

These 'emission
nebulae' are





predominantly red (glowing hydrogen) and/or greeny-blue (glowing oxygen), so I used a special filter to suppress the light at all other wavelengths. If it wasn't for these filters, all you'd see in the images would be a load of light pollution and a few stars.

A unique aspect of this type of photography is that in order to enhance the images, I had to take additional 'calibration' images to suppress various forms of noise. Part of that process entailed getting up about forty-five minutes before dawn, shooting a few dozen images of the dawn sky and then shutting down and going back to bed. It's not my favourite task...

So next time you're up at the huts and you see me getting up before dawn, you'll know that you aren't dreaming – it really is me – I'm just going out to take some calibration pictures. But be re-assured folks, I will be heading back to my pit shortly! Some things don't change...

Dave



Steve Wrigley (Wriggers) swimming in Rob's Hole Little Langdale...Brrrrr
Photo Andy Dunhill

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