

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

Saturday 24th. October 1964

Bulletin 14 Side 1

Dear Member,

Contributions for the Bulletin have been steadily rolling in, and I am very grateful to those people who have sent accounts of Climbing and holidays etc. I am holding some of them over to bolster up the Winter issues, I hope those concerned do not mind.

ANNUAL DINNER DANCE 14th. November 1964

Although the response for the Dinner Dance has been first class, there is still time to book a place. I must know very quickly if anyone else would like a ticket. Send your £1 for the ticket direct to me. Accommodation is available for the night at the Red Lion Hotel. Please make your own arrangements with the Manager. Langdale and Dunmail Huts will both be open, and Derek Price tells me that those using Dunmail must make their own arrangements and collect the key in advance from the farm.

The Guest Speaker for the evening will be Colonel Westmorland the well known Lake and personality.

CHRIS BONINGTON ILLUSTRATED LECTURE

Harry Robinson tells me that the Lancaster Mountaineering Club are presenting a lecture by Chris Bonington entitled 'New Climbs in the Alps' (Illustrated) on Tuesday 1st. December at the Ashton Hall, Lancaster at 8p.m. Tickets are 3/6d. and are available from Harry at 5, New Road, Lancaster (His Climbing Shop Premises)

EMERGENCY CENTRE IN LAKE LAND

Mr. J. C. Sinclair (an A.R.C.C. member) has kindly offered Barn accommodation to members as an emergency centre, at his farm in the Whicham Valley S. E. from Black Combe, Map Reference Sheet 88 149825. The Manager Mr. A.G. Reid should be contacted at Millom 310. Public transport is available by bus and train. The full address is PO House Farm, Silcroft, Near Millom, Cumberland

NEWS FROM THE HUTSBuckbarrow

Eddie Kelly writes :- The Buckbarrow Meet was duly held on 5th. & 6th. September, and attracted so many members that to accomodate everybody all the reserve of camp beds had to be brought into use.

The programme followed was the usual one by which everyone who could not produce a doctor's certificate, was taken or sent out to get thoroughly wet before the evening meal on Saturday. The biggest party chose to visit Upper Eskdale, and on the way back discovered a place where you can get wetter than wet. For the connoisseur in these matters, a visit to Quagrigg Moss is an absolute must, and so is a pair of thigh boots when he gets there.

It was generally agreed that Leo Brown who did the cooking almost single handed, had on this occasion excelled himself. Copies of his Sunday afternoon 'Instant Left-Overs' recipe are available to anyone writing to him sending a packet of chocolate biscuits with their application

Langdale

Mick Pooler writes about the Langdale Meet 26th. & 27th. September :- Apart from the hot water boiler nearly blowing up, the meet got off to a quiet start. On Saturday two walking parties went out, one keeping down in the valleys and covering about 20 miles all in all, The other party went up Mill Ghyll and onto the Gimmer path, finishing down Mickleden. The rock climbing party started off on Lower & Upper Scout Crag where rope technique and abseiling (classic) was taught. From Scout they continued onto Tarn Crag amidst heavy showers of rain and finally finished by all ascending Little Gulleys (Diff.) on Pavey Ark before descending to the New D. G.

On Sunday there was more heavy rain which cleared about 11a.m.. The Helvellyn - Fairfield Range was inundated with three separate parties from the hut whilst the rock climbers went on Raven Crag, Side Pike and Bowfell.

Forty members turned up, including many new faces, and I think everyone enjoyed themselves. My thanks to the members who lead the climbing

(Langdale Meet - continued)

and walking parties during the weekend, and to everyone who turned up to make the Meet a success. A special thanks to those who delayed their departure on Sunday night in case a search was necessary for the Meet Leader who returned a little late ! Thanks really, but what do you think my name is D.W. P.? !!!

Another Meet is planned in the near future.

Phil Calvert has written to me asking if any member is interested in an expedition to Arctic Norway next June. Unfortunately I have mislaid the letter and cannot remember any details other than a figure of £60 or so. If anyone is interested, contact Phil at 50, Meadowfields, Whitby, Yorks.

OVERHEARD AT LANGDALE

A Suggestion...

... that those members who insist on having a five course meal at peak dining hours, and hog all the hot plates, should either stay at the hut mid-week or dine out!

A Story...

... of the Long-Established A.R.C.C. member who made his way to Borrowdale with the intention of camping, and providing 'fodder' in the morning for a party of members who were making an attempt on the 'Three Peaks' walk. ----- When he came to erect the tent, he found he had forgotten to take the tent poles !

AM Account...

....of how 3 'ale-happy' climbers recently set off from the hut in the early hours of the morning to climb Bowfell and watch the sun rise (though none of them seemed quite sure why). After resting (and falling asleep) just short of the summit - - - - It dawned on them !!

THE NORTH FACE OF THE AIGUILLE DU MIDI (BY THE FRENDO SPUR)

An account by Harry Wiggans of one of the climbs he did whilst in Chamonix this Summer. (More to follow, I believe)

It was around 4 p. m. on Thursday 6th. August, when a party of six people, three ropes of two, set out from the 'Plan de l'Aiguille' for the Frendo Spur on the North face of the Midi. The party consisted of two lads from Leeds, first names only, Dave and Tooley who made one rope up. On the second rope were Bill Harper from Fleetwood and Stuart from Newcastle, whilst Mike from Aberdeen (I should worry) and myself made up the last.

The idea behind starting at this time, was to climb part way up the face, bivouac, and then have an early start on the following morning, enabling us to reach the 1000 ft. icefield quite early. The actual climb itself is 3,500 ft. long, with the icefield about two thirds of the way up. It was 5p.m. when we crossed the moraine to get onto the rock, then we put away crampons and ice axes, and donned crash helmets. The climbing at first was quite easy, and everyone climbed solo, Dave leading the way, with me bringing up the rear. (The suicide position - stones were rattling down onto my helmet all the way) After about 300ft., we roped up, Dave and Tooley going first, Bill and Stuart second, Mike and I following. Mike said he didn't feel too good, and asked me to lead. We'd climbed two rope's lengths when Stuart screamed 'Take cover Harry!' Mike and I crouched under an overhang, and then a rock six times the size of a football hurtled down and broke the slab we were standing on, clean in half. We both paled, then shouted to the others that we were still in one piece.

We continued climbing, nothing being very hard, but great care was needed as every thing was very loose. Another eight lengths were climbed and by this time the sun had gone down and it was quite dark. It was time to bivouac. I was lucky and found a large enough ledge to lie on, the others had to sit up all night. A hot brew, a little food and then we settled down for the night. I awoke about 4a.m. having slept like a log, but the others complained of how cold the night had been. Mike lit the stove, and soon a hot brew was under way. We ate hard boiled eggs, corn beef (Brought all the way From Aberdeen) and French bread. It was a cold clear morning when we started

(The Frendo Spur - continued)

climbing again, and the rock was very cold to the hands. The ropes carried on as before, Dave and Tooley, Bill and Stuart, then Mike and I. Mike asked me to carry on leading, and I was a little annoyed at this as it was a bit dodgy changing places on the belay stances. We had climbed a couple of rope's lengths when there was a crack like thunder - I looked to the left and saw a huge hanging glacier falling away from the face no more than thirty feet away. Mike complained that he didn't like this place one little bit. We all agreed that we had been in safer places! We continued climbing up cracks and chimneys, there seemed to be no end of them, and they were getting quite difficult. At last we reached the icefield and were really impressed. Mike remarked that he'd never climbed anything as steep in Scotland. It looked vertical, actually it was 60 degrees. Here we split into two ropes of three, Dave leading one with Bill and Stuart, Mike led the other. It was 9a.m. when we started. The ice was in a terrible state and there was 5in. of soft snow on it, which had to be cleared away before one could cut a step. We slowly made our way up, the steps melting away as fast as they were cut. Screw pitons were used for belays, which I didn't have much faith in. It was 12-30p.m., and clouds started swirling around us. We were in for a storm, and we all knew it. What worried us was the fact that we were still only halfway up the icefield. Half an hour later it started hailing and blowing a gale. Soon, fingers were numbed, and snow goggles had to be removed, as they were so plastered with snow, no-one could see. We pressed on and eventually reached the final rocks. By this time everyone was soaked through to the skin and shivering with cold. It was 4p.m. and it had taken us seven hours to cross the icefield. The rock was just a white mass and it was here where the Grade V superior pitches were. We split into three ropes again, climbing as before. Under the conditions it proved to be some of the hardest climbing I have ever done. Everyone climbed slowly, looking at fingers to make sure they were gripping, it was cold. The first two ropes reached the summit and I followed, before shouting to Mike to start climbing. He was more than a hundred feet below me, starting a traverse which had proved to be the hardest part of the climb, when he screamed "'Hold me!'" The rope tightened about my shoulders when he fell off,

(The Frendo Spur - continued)

and I was pulled off my stance. I fought to get back on the stance and hold the rope tight at the same time. First I put my knee on, then managed to get a heel up, finally easing myself into a standing position. I yelled at Mike to get his feet on something, which he did and I was able to pull him up onto better holds., eventually joining me at the top. I pointed out the belay to him. It was a sling with a knot in it, jammed in a crack. We had both almost proceeded by the quickest route down to Chamonix ! He gave me a weary smile and showed me his hands. They were cut very badly, and it required a quick first aid job before we staggered along the summital ridge to join the others at the Telepherique Station where we spent the night. It was 7p.m.

The following morning we left the Midi and descended to Chamonix by the Telepherique, feeling rather pleased with ourselves at having done such a route, even though at times while climbing, we were rather worried

Harry Wiggins

John Britt, who broke a leg on Scafell in June, is fit and active once more, but without vehicle or ready cash. Car and bar owners beware !

Finally, my usual plea for contributions. I have heard of one or two weddings, and additions to families etc. but the last time I ~~xxxxxxx~~ reported second hand news of this nature, I credited someone with a non-existent second daughter !

Sincerely

Barry Ayre

17, Scafell Avenue,
Morecambe,
Lancs.