

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

Saturday 16th. January 1965

Bulletin 15 Side 1

Dear Member,

Best wishes to all A.R.C.C. members for good climbing and fell walking in 1965.

The Annual Dinner Dance at the Red Lion Hotel, Grasmere, on 14th Nov. was a huge success, and the only complaint I had was that it didn't go on long enough. Perhaps we could start earlier next year. Our Guest Speaker Colonel (Rusty) Westmorland wrote to Bill Carter afterwards, and Bill has passed the letter on to me for publication :-

Dear Mr. Carter,

I would like to thank you for being so kind to us and making us feel so happy and welcome on Saturday. In fact we agreed that we had never enjoyed a club dinner more, and certainly I have never seen the friendliness of the younger members exceeded - It was marvellous.

Thankyou very much for having us and making it such a pleasant evening

Yours Sincerely

Rusty Westmorland

I feel that I must reply to Colonel Westmorland, and thank him in turn for starting the evening off in the right way with his interesting and amusing speech

The Secretary tells me that many members let their sub lapse for many months each year. Membership ceases on July 1st if the subscription due on the 1st. April previous has not been paid. Graduate Members are also reminded that it is up to them to apply for full membership to the Secretary after they have been Graduates for 6 months

Children in the Huts

For a trial period, it has been ~~xxxxxx~~ decided to allow Member's children to stay at the huts at the same fee as members (Langdale 3/- per night) They must be accompanied by their parents and the family room must be used. This ruling will be enforced, and the duty warden will be responsible for making sure that the family room is available

News from the HutsLangdale - Bishop's Scale

An Open Meet Weekend has been arranged for the weekend 29th. 31st. January.

Those interested in leading parties on the rocks or the fells should contact

Mick Pooler at 33, Wilson Street, Bury, Lancs

A Rugby match has been arranged between A.R.C.C. and St. Joseph's Old Boys, Blackpool, to take place on Ambleside R.U.F.C. ground on the afternoon of February 13th. This match has been arranged by John Gilmour. Anyone who wants a game should contact him at 35, Crystal Road, Blackpool, or be at Bishop's Scale on the morning of the match. Supporters will be more than welcome.

Guests Graduate Members are reminded that they are not allowed to bring guests - this covers children

Log Book A new Log Book has been started at the hut, and fell-walkers as well as climbers are asked to record details of their days out, This is the only record the Club have of member's activities, so please write legibly and keep the book in better condition than the last one.

In addition to Mass being held each Sunday between Easter and the end of September in the Club Chapel, it is often held during the Winter months when a priest is in residence

The following is an account by Dickie Seed of a trip to the Dolomites last Summer. My apologies for any mistakes in the spelling of place names. This contribution has been held over from the last Bulletin.

Dickie Seed in the Dolomites

After the usual journey out to Innsbruck in a hot, sticky bar car, we passed over the Brenner, eating sausages and still drinking. This was followed by a hot, sticky bus journey (horrors-no bars on S.A.D. buses!) to Plon and then up via the Sellajoch to the Rif Toni Dametz. Nice cool air (and a beer) A full list of our routes is entered proudly in the log at Bishop's Scale, so here I will just touch the highlights.

Wine is only 400L a litre

After a week of 'returning form', Eric Wallis and I did what I am told is about the 6th. ascent of the 'Via Franchesca' on the South Buttress of the First Sella Tower. Although short, this artificial route is graded VI sup., and lays straight up the continual overhang of the smooth yellow wall. Despite the 'yellow is loose' doctrine, the rock was mainly sound, though someone is going to have a nasty shock one day when they mantle shelf on the one and only ledge - half of it is loose! This is perhaps the most exhilarating and certainly the hardest peg route I have ever done - an airy dangle on worn yellow rock above the green alp and pines so far below. The route took us about 7 hours before we descended by the west ridge, a fairly easy way down.

One of the best routes in the area is the 'Keineriss', the Diagonal Cracks on the Fünfingerspitze. A IV sup., it is sustained and interesting at about mild severe standard. The route takes the only line of weakness up the hanging left wall of the East Face, and follows a line of cracks and chimneys from a traverse left from the top of the Central Gully. the pitches, all long, are continuously interesting, and one or two are mildly sensational. All the holds and the necessary belay pegs, plus the odd one for a runner, are there, and the whole thing from the Traverse to the Schlester Crack which makes so magnificent a finish a few feet from the ~~finish~~ summit, is a joy to be on. One word of warning - don't fall off it, you'd have to prussick back on, and once over the second pitch, a slanting hanging crack, the route would prove tricky to reverse!

Descents in the Dolomites can prove tricky, the abseil pegs though often

cemented in, are cunningly concealed from the uninitiated, and a long way apart. Mike Ashton and Pete Downing, who did the traverse of the Funfingerspitze while Eric and I feasted on the meadow with a roast chicken, peaches, beer and binoculars, took only one 120 ft. rope, and had to do about nine abseils to get off, several of them blind! We sweated for them on that meadow didn't we Eric?

Avoid parties above you, the descents are usually 'somewhat friable' (guidebookese for adjectival case) and crash hats are NOT cissy. Mike stopped half the Schmidtkaniene with his after pulling the wrong chockstone, and precipitated half the mountain rapidly screewards. Very glad of it, he was...

The finale, for me at any rate, was the West face of the Third Tower, a steep clean route on mainly sound rock which goes straight up the centre of the face, taking the small roofs direct and bypassing the main ones by a delicate traverse. We got abit lost in this, the upper part of the lowerx face, but once on a broad ledge which slants across, we found the crux pitch without difficulty. Ten minutes for a smoke, to take in the view, sheltered from the odd brick which whirred down by the overhang above, and we watched 3 parties in the Jahrweg Gully (III), showering debris on each other and exchanging what we took to be the same polite phrases in English, German or Italian!

Then on to the crux pitch, and ax magnificent pitch it was too, the 60ft. crack was just nice for finger jams, with little nicks for bridging either side, and the odd foot jam up above where it bulged below the roof. This was surmounted by way of a continuation of the crack - using one good peg for protection, and a chock jug. You bridge high, shoulder against the roof, and put a hand and foot out bridged against the pendulous right wall. Swing out, change feet, and feel for a hold in the crack above the roof, which gives the pull necessary to get over it into a nice rest position, from which you can look down and admire the view of - alp!

After that, things ease off and the last bit of 'guidebookesse', about a desperate layback, you find is easy bridging and a walk up the edge of the flake. All in, an excellent route. Scenic, interesting, abit technical, especially on the non-existent stances on some pitches, and a fitting climax to a good climbing holiday.

I learned quite a lot in the Dolomites, you need trust in your companion, a lot of rope, low cunning (for being first into the bivvy sack and last down the abseils) and having these, a big 'ammer for swiping the free samples Ricardo Cossin & his merry men leave sprouting from some of the routes!

Ian Roper (Sherpa) has written the following article entitled :-

Three Modern Climbs

Since the publication of the last series of rock climbing guides to the Lake District, a very large number of climbs have been done of which little is known, so it might be of interest to record some impressions of a few of the newer ones.

After our return from the Dolomites, Dave Hall and I decided to visit Scafell, but unfortunately the weather remained unsettled until early September when a week of fine weather defied all the forecasts and provided the dry conditions necessary for climbing on the East Buttress.

A shivery bivouac in Upper Eskdale was followed by a stroll (or stagger) up Cam Spout to the East Buttress. A gorgeous sunrise had been belied by grey ~~xxx~~ skies and mist in the valleys. After an ascent of Pegasus, we scrambled across the foot of the crag to the start of our chosen route - Ichabod. Dave led the first pitch which consisted of pleasant climbing up a gangway to an overhang which was reached by a difficult move to reach a desperately sloping stance where Dave belayed to a rickety looking flake with his foot in a sling

I led through, and up the next pitch. After climbing a little way above Dave to fix a runner, I descended and tensioned from the runner to a peg which enabled me to make a delicate move into a steep corner. This section was accomplished quickly as the peg was loose. Above me was another peg, solid this time, and looming large as the last protection on this long pitch. The peg was reached by a pull on finger jams, and then I was able to rest by bridging wide in the corner. From here the route left the corner for a diversion onto the wall on the right. The first move was a pull round the corner on sloping holds. Having done this, I realised I was committed, and just had to push on. From below, the angle had seemed reasonable in contrast with the blank overhanging wall below, but now I realised the true verticality of the ~~thex~~ rock around me. Precarious balance move followed precarious balance move, always on sloping holds and with no protection at all in evidence. Eventually one particularly frightening move brought me to a crack where there should have been a protection peg. There wasn't! Fighting down a temptation to panic, I rested as well as I could, then began to balance along a narrow sloping shelf below an overhanging wall. At first it wasn't too bad until, just short of the chimney, what few handholds there were, disappeared and the shelf faded into vertical wall. So near and yet so far, the

V chimney was within jumping distance. I crouched against the wall, unable to stand upright and with retreat unthinkable. Eventually the move was made and I stepped thankfully into the V chimney and grasped a blue sling threaded into the crack. Dave followed with great aplomb and tackled the next pitch just as the first drops of rain began to fall.

The crag was by this time shrouded with mist, and our friends on the ground started to disappear in the direction of Wasdale. Dave had a hard time on the V chimney, resting in slings after each strenuous move, till he reached a sloping ledge, then a crack on good holds led to a ledge, but no belay. By this time water had started to trickle down the chimney. Dave complained that he was standing in a waterfall, but good holds and runners appeared with ever increasing frequency and he progressed upwards with no great difficulty. The last 15ft. however presented an overhanging wall of gleaming shine. A party just finishing Yellow Slab Variation, kindly dropped him a rope and before long he was up.

All this took time, and as every minute passed, the mist thickened and the rain came down faster, consequently the rock became greasier, till, when my turn came, it was like trying to climb on a vertical skating rink. Thanks to Dave's strength and a stronger rope, I eventually got up the vertical slime and sprawled onto a ledge at the top of the crag. Even the descent via Broad Stand was desperate under those 'epic' conditions.

Vastly improved weather prevailed at Pavey Ark a fortnight later, when armed to the teeth, David and I made an ascent of Astra.

The route follows the right wall of the 'Impossible Groove' mentioned in the description of Hobson's Choice in the Langdale Guide. The first two pitches are the same as those of Hobson's Choice and these were overcome with some 'thrutching', and a lot of difficulty. The next pitch is the crux, so Dave was pushed into the lead. A delicate mantleshelf brought him to a thin crack where he threaded a sling round a minute chockstone obviously placed there by human agency. He then had several goes at rounding the overhanging rib onto a slab, with a confidence-giving line runner on the far edge. From the runner some very thin moves on steep rock led to a resting place below a steep wall complete with a peg in place. The stance above was soon reached and he belayed to a solidly inserted peg as the natural belays were small

The tension move was simplified for me by the rope from above, but even so I found it hard. Thankfully I reached the thin flake and mantleshelved onto this. The moves above were on very small holds, but there were plenty of them. Soon I arrived at the stance, eager to get to grips with the next pitch which followed the continuation of the slab and slanted to the right.

The pitch proved very pleasant, delicate, exposed and on good rock. Good protection could be arranged in a thin crack which is the main left handhold for this 80ft. pitch. Another mantleshelf onto a spike at the end of the slab brought me to a grass ledge where I belayed to a horrifyingly loose block wedged precariously in a groove - Dave having our only pegs. Dave was soon up and disappeared up a groove which was both difficult and wet, and soon we were at the top, shocked to find an old lady ('she must be eighty') on the descent route in shoes.

Later on, one cold October day we gazed at the scaring white cone of Riger Mortis on Castle Rock. Only a week before we had ascended the first pitch only to be diverted onto the Ghost by wet rock on Riger.

The first pitch was quickly overcome and we belayed below the cone. Dave and I had successive attempts at the corner on the left of the cone and eventually a peg was reached which gave both rest and security after doing some very thin bridging and the arrangement of a lot of 'Psycho' protection. On the way we passed the minute flakes chipped by Paul Ross on the first ascent. To have stood in slings on these flakes must have required great confidence, as slings placed in them required very little encouragement to roll off again. Whilst Dave was battling with the problem of reaching the peg, I was amused to see Terry Sullivan peel off Agony, but this did not exactly increase my confidence. Dave parachuted down to the ledge, and I tied on. After a short rest on the peg, my fingers felt strong again, so I decided to push on. Laying away on a tiny pocket hold which accommodated two fingers to the first joint, I was able to reach high to the left for a finger hold on the edge of the wet groove, to which I quickly traversed across the overhanging wall, using exercises in imagination for my feet and my right hand. Once in the groove I was able to rest and make two precarious moves on the slippery rock to reach the stance where I knocked home a good solid pitch.

By the time Dave had joined me, the gloom had started gathering and we

Three Modern Climbs (almost finished)

Side 8

realised how long we had been on the route, Dave led the familiar traverse to the arete in near darkness and later the exultant party drank 'health and ~~xxxx~~ strength' in the New Dungeon Ghyll.

Dunmail

Derek Price is making an appeal for furniture for the Dunmail Hut. Would anyone willing to donate any old armchairs (not too old) or the like, please write to him at :- St. Mary's Cottage, Station Lane, Barton, Nr. Preston.

Birth Announcement

Mullen To Maureen and John, a second son on Nov 26th 1964 - Congratulations

Trip to the Alps

Mr. R. G. Leeming of Witley in Surrey has written to me asking if any priest would be interested in a trip by car (convertible) to the Alps for three weeks in June to early July. Objective is touring, 'Fell walking', seeing the country and taking photographs. Cost depends on standard of living required - say £60-£90. Mr. Leeming says he is 54, a bachelor, can serve Mass, a bit slow on the hills, not adverse to using cable lifts and like vino. If anyone is interested, perhaps they could contact Mr. Leeming at Northcote, Witley, Surrey. Tel Wormley 2968

My apologies to those people who's articles I haven't included this time. Keep sending them please, other members do like to hear what is going on.

I shall be in Austria Skiing from the 22nd January, hence the haste in getting this issue out

Sincerely

Barry Ayre

17, Scafell Avenue,
Morecambe,
Lancs.