

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

Saturday 26th February 1966

Bulletin 19 Side 1

Dear Member,

Since the last Bulletin in September, ~~most~~ most of our contributors seem to have gone into hibernation, hence the long delay inbetween issues. The Dinner Dance in November was a huge success once more, and 100 members attended. The Guest Speaker Mr. John Wyatt (the full time Lake District Warden) gave a most entertaining speech, and started the evening off in the right vein. In view of the success of the evening, provisional arrangements have been made for next year's function to be held at the same venue, The Red Lion Hotel, Grasmere

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 30th April at St. Ignatius Hall, Pump St., Preston, and commence at 2-30p.m.

PLEASE MAKE A SPECIAL ATTEMPT TO BE PRESENT. There are a number of very important positions on the Management Committee to fill, and it is up to YOU who is elected during the next vital 3 years, when the Club is hoping to expand.

AGENDA

1. President's Report
2. Secretary's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Election of Officers
5. Any other business.

Nominations are invited for the following vacancies on the Management Committee, and should be received by the Secretary - W. F. Carter Esq., 'Lynden Lea', Dimples Lane, Garstang, Lancs, not less than 14 days before the A.G.M.

Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, 1 Committee Member.  
The officials due to retire are Mr. R. Rogers (Chairman) - Not prepared to stand again. Mr. F. Fenlon (Vice Chairman) Mr. W.F. Carter (Secretary) - Not prepared to stand again for Secretary, and Mr J.B. Ayre (Committee Member)

Any suggested alteration to a Club rule, must reach the Secretary ONE Month before the A.G.M.. Any other business to go on the Agenda must have been received by the Secretary at least 7 days before the Meeting, and proposed by 2 members of the Club.

### Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions are once again due on 1st. April. The Annual Sub will be 30/- as and from this date, and not £1 as in previous years. Please assist the Secretary by sending the correct amount - PROMPTLY ! Members who do not pay their subscriptions promptly are not entitled to use the Club huts.

Graduate Members are again reminded that it is up to them to apply in writing for full membership after they have served a probationary period of 6 months

### Graduate Members

The following have been elected as Graduate Members :-

Barker Rev. A. Ushaw College	Hall Miss M. Accrington
Barry G. Billingham	Hubberstey P.J. Preston
Cattigan Miss B. Preston	Mathews Mrs. A.H. Penwortham
Booker James. Barnsley	Mathews Mr. F.J. Penwortham
Booker John Barnsley	Nye Miss G.M. Garstang
Crook Miss M.A. Caerns, N. Wales	O'Neill P.D. Liverpool 9
Greenoff S. Barnsley	Sidoli R.M.T. Oswestry
Greenoff W. Barnsley	Walton F. Ribblesdale
Hall R.W. Wigan	Whalley Rev. B. Ushaw College

### Full Members

The following have been elected to full membership :-

Boyle Rev. T.J. Rotherham	Ketchell J. Preston
Briggs K.H. St. Helens	Peel G.L. Rydal
Coupe J.W. Preston	Rogers Mrs. P. St Annes
Farrell Miss A. Morecambe	Stirling W.C. Blackpool
Farrell C.J. St. Annes	Tomlinson Miss A. Accrington
Faulkner Rev. Stratford-on-Avon	Topping C.J. Preston
Fox Mr. E.G. Southport	Higgins J. Rochdale
Fox Mrs E.G. Southport	
Jackson J.D. Ushaw College	



Arthur Halliwell from St. Helens has written to me offering use of the St. Helens Mountaineering Club Hut in North Wales to members of the A.R.C.C. The Hut is situated near the village of Capel Gannon which is about 2 miles north of Bettws-y-Coed. It is equipped with bunks for 12, with mattresses but no blankets. Lighting is electric, cooking is by calor gas, a chemical toilet is at the rear of the Hut and water is drawn from a nearby spring. Anyone wishing to use the Hut should contact Arthur at 2, Collitt Crescent, Clockface, St. Helens, well in advance of the date of their intended visit. The Hut is on private land and the terms of lease demand that visitors be accompanied by a home member. There is also the chance that the place may be in use, or even full at any time, so it is important that visitors should write first. Cars cannot be driven to the hut unless they are the Land Rover type. The walk from the road takes about 10 minutes. Hut fees are 3/- per person, per night

#### The late Terry O'hara

Terry O'hara, a club member for a number of years, and a member of the Northumberland Mountaineering Club, died on the 19th. December last in Newcastle General Hospital from severe head injuries received when a car hit him from behind as he was cycling to his home at 22, Osborne Rd., Newcastle-on-Tyne from Killingworth Planning Office, where he was working during his Christmas vacation. He was a fourth year student in Architecture at Newcastle University, and was married in August last year to Miss Pauline Sweeney who was also a member of the Club.

On behalf of all those members who knew Terry I would like to express sympathy to Pauline and his family.

Arrangements are being made to hold a commemorative Mass at Bishop's Scale over the Easter Weekend. The time and date will be announced on the notice board at Langdale

The Year of the Alps (continued)

It was becoming obvious that even the Hornli ridge wouldn't be fit for the likes of us by the end of the week. We had seen the ~~xxxx~~ rescue helicopter take off to a fatal accident on it that very day. So we stayed at the Rothorn hut- at least we could do the modest Trifflhorn. Anticipating a change in the weather, many more parties arrived including two M.A. advanced courses who bivouacked just outside the hut. Powerful binoculars belonging to the hut warden showed tracks in the new snow on the Monte Rosa, but they only went half way up. In the morning Colin led off at a good speed to the Trifflhorn where our route diverged from the previous day's. We cramponed up a snow-filled couloir and pruned at the top to remove crampons and photograph the Dent Blanche at first light. Moving together along the crest of the ridge we overtook a French party who had yielded to the temptation to drop down on the sunny side. From the Trifflhorn at about 7-0 a.m. we could see the two tiny figures making rapid progress up the north face of the Chergabelhorn.

At last the weather was brilliant so we decided to press on over the heavily corniced Col du Mountet towards the S.E. ridge of the Zinal Rothorn as far as the Cherrothornich. It was magnificent. We found a perlon sling which came in for abseiling off the biggest gendarme. The summit of the Rothorn looked very near: it was hard to believe that it was three hours X climbing from the joch in good conditions. Getting down was quite tricky: we had to descend a sun-warmed couloir in a very unstable condition. The more people came down, the worse it was, but at last we were all on the safe side of the bergschrund. It took ages to cross the glacier where the snow was only just bearing and to traverse a steep snow ~~xxxx~~ slope which kept showering us with mean little avalanches. By this time one was liable to sink in waist deep. Careless route-finding brought us out above the hut but the direct way was barred by a cliff of several hundred feet. A detour and a final glacier plod brought us back at 3 p.m., feeling as though we'd done something at last after being out eleven hours. On that day one M.A. advanced party turned back from the Chergabelhorn at the Grand Gendarme and some of the others retreated from the Rothorn.

And that was more or less it. The fine day was a fluke and there was no miraculous improvement of conditions. I couldn't raise any support for the Leiterspitzen, a difficult rock route, only comments about the well-known mountaineers who had been benighted thereon. So on our last day we shopped like any tourists, studied the graves in the churchyard and had a final binge at Burgener's, choosing from the a la carte instead of the plat du jour.

We had been planning for ages, how this year we were going to climb really big mountains. Was it all worthwhile, not even to climb the Hadelhorn, never mind the Zmutt ridge, not even a sun-tan to flash around at home? In the year of the Alps, the Alps disappointed many climbers, especially perhaps those of intermediate standard like ourselves. A pity, but the ~~xxxx~~ compulsive mountaineers will just have to come back another year.



The Year of the Alps (continued)

Most climbers had come down to the valley because of the bad weather and the Hotel Bahnhof was packed to the limit. I had to sleep on a mattress in the bathroom. There wasn't much danger of anyone wanting a bath, as it costs 3 francs and there is an excellent shower free. Paula Biner evidently operates the Bahnhof by assuring that on any given night half the residents will be away in huts, therefore twice as many bookings can be made as there are beds available. Normally this is reasonable but, even when the system breaks down, no-one is turned away. During our stay I also slept in Paula's own flat and in her niece's chalet. The niece's husband was a friendly guide who used to advise us about choice of routes. He only spoke German and we speak Yorkshire and a bit of 'foreign' but Paula is fluent in several languages and can interpret most conversations.

To give some of the new snow a chance to clear we decided to visit the Riffelhorn, at 10,000ft., the local Scout Crag. Wearing our stonefall helmets (by courtesy of I.C.I.) we traversed this impressive rock above the Riffelsee. The rock turned out to be the non-friable kind but, before we could find the more difficult routes on the Gorner glacier side, snow started again. Next day the snow line was down to the Schwarzsee and the Matterhorn looked like winter. In desperation we resorted to playing bridge. It was too cold and damp to sit outside so we had to play in the bedroom or the crowded kitchen. On Thursday evening the prospects were very poor. We cheered ourselves up at Burgener's and went to see a film about a soppy American girl who was hauled up the Matterhorn. Such entertainments were all part of the centenary celebrations.

The 20,000 Chinese rumoured to be in Chamonix seem to have stayed there but we met a few Japanese climbers. They spent most of the fortnight sitting at the foot of the Matterhorn north face, waiting to begin an honourable ascent. On the Friday of our first week we decided that a snow-plod up the Breithorn would be better than nothing so we made a late start for the Ganderegg hut. Passing beneath the east face I compared the Matterhorn with 1962: this time the Hornli ridge was plastered with snow and bore no resemblance to the straightforward route we had expected. Although we were only going to do the South West face, even our easy Breithorn expedition was fated, for we had to turn back in a white-out on the Theodule pass. Ski-ing would have been the best prospect.

Bad weather, bridge and Burgener's occupied the next forty eight hours. The cloud was down to the rooftops of Zermatt, it rained incessantly and the news was always the same - barometer falling. On Monday afternoon we stormed up the Rothorn hut in about half the official time. Ian and Anne Clough arrived, borrowed some sugar and lent us their French guide book. Two hours later Ian's M.A. course wandered in and paid us back the sugar. They all did the same route as us the next day, the Wellenkuppe. We roped up at the hut, crossed the neves of the Trift glacier and made a detour below some seracs to the foot of the Triftjoch. A snow shoulder brought us to the rock arete. Crampons were necessary to negotiate the 600 feet of icy rocks and gain the final snow ridge. Thick cloud enveloped us until well on the way down when the sun broke through and tempted us to stop for zweites Fruhstuck. The Wellenkuppe alone is, of course, a short expedition in a normal season we would have tried to traverse the Obergabelhorn to the Schonbiel hut.

The following article has been contributed by Angela Faller -

The Year of the Alps - in retrospect

In spite of rumours that the road now runs all the way to Zermatt, we had to leave the car with the hundreds of others in St. Niklaus. So Sunday July 18th. found Mike, Colin and me in the little train that runs up the Mättertal, with enough gear for a Rum Doodle expedition. As we waited for the peaks to come into view, we were all wondering the same thing - would the Zmutt ridge go, or must we be content with the Hornli? Would we get to the Tiefmatten Slabs and find them impossible because of ice? - the thought had been tantalising us for weeks.

The Matterhorn was hidden that evening, but we did find Phil Calvert (fit from Chamonix?) already installed at the Hotel Bahnhof, full of stories of epics on easier routes. It soon became clear that something was wrong. Snow had fallen regularly since the day of the celebrated T.V. broadcast, putting most routes completely out of condition. And we only had ten days.

However we set off on Monday for the Tisch hut with provisions supposed to last two nights. We hoped to start with the Rotgrat on the Alphubel (PD) and possibly to return to Zermatt the day after, by traversing the Rimpfischhorn. Weather conditions being uncertain, we entered our intended route in the hut book, intending to set off for the Rotgrat if it was freezing at 3 a.m.. But when we awoke, the temperature was already 5°C. The 'gandien' with whom we had no language in common, brought the book across and solemnly crossed out 'Rotgrat'. He conveyed that the ordinary route up the Alphubel might easily take 6 hours in the conditions, and managed to persuade us to set out that way instead. In the dark, we made our way up the moraine south of the Rotgrat, and roped up at the Alphubel glacier to begin the snow plod up to the Alphubeljoch.

Soon tracks diverged towards the Allalinhorn. The Weisshorn stood out perfectly against the lightening sky, but ominous streaks of clouds partly obscured the Matterhorn. From the joch the route continued up the S. E. arête. Despite the high initial temperature the wind at this height was so strong that we wore our duvets for comfort as we pressed on up the steepest section. At last we stood on our first 4,000 m. peak, just in time to catch a glimpse of the Mischabel and the peaks beyond Saas-Fee before clouds piled up and obliterated them. Everyone felt terrible as a result of the decision not to spend a day getting acclimatised. Snow started to fall so that we were wet through long before we reached the hut - it took nearly as long to go down through the deep snow as it had taken to come up. Looking at our depleted rations we decided unanimously to get straight back to Zermatt: the traverse of the Rimpfischhorn was far too long for us to attempt in the snowy conditions.

IN the evening we felt much better after discovering Burgener's and dining there. It's about half way up the main street, above a shoe shop. All along the street were displays and decorations for the 'Year of the Alps' and although the actual Matterhorn anniversary was earlier in July, Zermatt was still as crowded as ever. The town had spread in an untidy sort of way since 1962, and much building was still going on. There were roadworks down beyond the station but only a few official cars had penetrated so far. The teleferique system had been greatly extended so that plutocrats can now ride all the way to the Italian frontier by cable-car then by Sno-cat.



Buckharrow Eddie Kelly writes :- Our Autumn Meet in early October was another very successful one with unexpectedly fine weather and an excellent attendance. Saturday was Annardale day to where everybody was transported by car and from where the rock climbers went onto Pillar, and the walkers made their way back to Wasdale via Red Pike, High Stile, Scarth Gap & Black Sail, with a diversionary party taking in Haystacks & Roses Sledgate.

On Sunday we were given a demonstration of stretcher lowering by our guests, a few members of South Ribble Mountain Rescue who had kindly brought along some of their equipment. After some instruction, the ARCC took over, and never have I seen such a fine display of courage as that shown by the first volunteer patient strapped helplessly in the stretcher when lowered over the cliff edge with nothing to prevent a nasty death after a long drop, but some XXER A.R.C.C. types hanging onto the ropes. There was no shortage of volunteers after the first lowere, but I still can't believe that when Derek Birkett was the 'patient', he got to the bottom safely, but of the hundreds of members who have dreamed of such an opportunity, I didn't think there were two who would have let the chance slip. But there were. Anyway, wherever I go, I now carry a knife.

Jim McVeigh the leader of South Ribble Mountain Rescue gave an invitation to any of our members to drop in on them when they have their weekly get-together on Wednesdays at Cop Lanem, Penwortham, Preston. They are looking for new members, but would also welcome anyone who just called in for a natter

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Bishop's Scale Langdale Several groups from University Climbing Clubs have used the hut from time to time through the winter, in addition to the Eskdale Outward Bound School, who occasionally stay mid-week. Members too have been making good use of it, particularly the lounge, thereby creating more room in the kitchen. A large quantity of logs have been purchased, which should help to cut the fuel bill considerably after the mammoth figure spent last year on coal and coke.

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My apologies to those members whose contributions have not been included this time. the bottom of the stencil is looming up, and this is the last one I have.

Sincerely

Barry Ayre

17, Scafell Ave., Morecambe.

Mick Pooler tells me that he has arranged two 'Meets'. They are :-

#### North Wales Meet

Weekend April 1st.-3rd. 1966. 'Buddy Mawr' Nantperis, Nr. Llanberis. Places available for 15 people (males only). It may be advisable to bring your own cutlery etc. also plates, mugs and sleeping bags. Further details available from Mick, so please contact him in good time so that transport can be arranged. The address is :- 33, Wilson St., Bury. Tel. Heywood 60111 Ext 28 (Working hours only)

#### Langdale Meet

Weekend 10th.-12th. June. This Meet is intended primarily for beginners (of walking & climbing), and newcomers to the Club will have the opportunity to meet and mix with other members. Those who wish to gain experience of fell walking and rock climbing can do so under experienced and competent instructors. It is the intention that everyone attending the Meet shall go out on the fells or rocks. It is hoped that this will meet with the same measure of success that we had last year.

Do please support Mick with these Meets. They take a lot of organising, and the North Wales one is a splendid opportunity for those members who have never had anywhere to stay when in that area.

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#### News From the Huts

Dunmail Derek Price writes :- Another burglary! Most of the cooking utensils stolen. Extra large frying pans and 10" stew pans wanted, -in fact pans of any size. Any contributions may be left at Bishop's Scale or contact me at St. Mary's Cottage, Station Lane, Barton.

Working Parties A great deal of work needs doing before Easter. Working parties will be going from Langdale each weekend to the end of March. Duty Wardens at Langdale will be responsible for organisation, and a list of work to be done will be on the Langdale Notice Board as well as at Dunmail.

Remember Dunmail contributes £300 per year and members benefit from it. Let's have a big effort this time and take some of the weight off the shoulders of the usual half dozen workers.

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