

ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

June 1969

Bulletin No. 32

Side 1

Dear Member,

Every bulletin produced over the last three years is evidence of the excellent work done by Broddy for the club, and I'm sure that I'm speaking on behalf of everybody in wishing him the same success as secretary. If any further comment is required from me, I can only add that I have to be able to maintain the same high standard throughout my tenure of office.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - was held at St. Ignatius' Hall, Preston, on the 26th April, and not only did it rain - one of the wettest days of the year - but due to some oversight, the Football Association had not been informed and the Cup Final was played the same afternoon. This, however, did not seem to deter anybody, and there was a record turnout of just over 100 members.

The Chairman, Bill Carter, after apologising for the unfortunate choice of the day, commented on the repayment of the Diocesan Loan, and said that we now hold the full title deeds to three of our four properties. The "handing over" ceremony at The Prince of Wales had been a great success, and it was regrettable that it had not been possible for more members to be present. The older members in particular, he said, would have enjoyed the yarning and reminiscing. As he was due to retire from office this year, he wished to thank all members for their co-operation with the management committee, and to thank the management committee for putting up with him for so long. Several officials were retiring this year, but he felt that he must pick out Barry (Ayre) for special "thanks". The job as secretary was not easy - was very time consuming - and he was sure that he was speaking on behalf of all the club in thanking Barry for a job extremely well done. Bill then read out a letter from the Club President, Bishop Pearson. The Bishop said that 'his' operation had been successful, and that he was now recuperating - and he wished to thank all the members who had sent their good wishes. He commented on the elections, saying that the club had been extremely fortunate in the past to have had the services of Reg. Rogers and Bill Carter as Chairman, and he hoped that Bill would put his name forward for re-election. On Barry's retirement, he said that in a club the size of ours, it is the careful attention to small details which keeps everything running smoothly, and he was proud to have had - in Barry - a secretary who had done the job so efficiently. His Lordship closed his letter by reminding members of Mass at the new time of 8.15, and appealed to us not to be late.

SECRETARY - Barry reported that club membership was slightly down on last year, with 368 members. This consisted of 235 'ordinary' members, 94 Life Members, 39 Graduate Members. (Last year: 250 - 89 - 40). However, as another 12-15 people "were in transition to membership", the true figure for 1969/70 was probably about 380 - the same as last year. He then gave some idea of the size of the job as Secretary, estimating that he had received (and answered)  $3\frac{1}{2}$  thousand letters in the last 3 years.

TREASURER - Jim Cooper, making his first report as treasurer, reported that the club showed a deficit of £621 in the books, but this could easily be explained - by the repayment of the £750 loan - and by large non-recurring repairs (especially at Langdale). He commented on Barry's membership figures, the subscription for the two years being nearly the same. The Club's money was also being put to good use, and members would see that although there were heavy financial commitments in the future, we had a very understanding bank manager and he could safely say that the club was "in a good healthy position".  
/Langdale

LANGDALE - Mick Pooler told us that the hut was now safe, and the last time he had seen it, it was still standing. The water supply had been looked at, and the dam had been completely rebuilt. The Hogg House required some comment. The floor was now level, .....because several members spent a weekend ..... levelling it, - and used 28 tons of stone and 8 cu. yards of concrete in the process. This in turn required some comment as the team involved had been in bed at 9 o'clock - the first load of stone arrived at ten past nine; the second load at 9.30; the first load of concrete at 10.30, and the second lot at 11.00. "We finally had our breakfast at about 2 O'clock in the afternoon." The remaining work, however, such as piercing the walls for the windows, was too complicated to be done piece meal at weekends, and would almost certainly have to be done by Contractors. He was hoping, in conjunction with Paul (Charnock) and Geof (Cross) to organise a walk between the three Lake District Huts. Anyone with any ideas of their own along those lines could get in touch with him. On his retiring from the position of warden, he would just like to thank everyone for co-operating in the smooth running of the establishment.

DUNMAIL - Geof Cross was too modest (he said!) to make too much of the fact that 'hi was the only hut to show a profit. This had been possible, he thought, because most of the work there had been carried out by members. He was glad to be able to report that there had not been any break-ins this winter - and this was probably due to the much greater usage of the hut by members. In answer to questions from the floor he admitted that the calor gas and water systems were both in need of attention but as it was a question of not only members' time and effort, but money, the club had to draw up a list of priorities, and these came rather low down. He did promise, however, to examine the present systems to see what improvements might be made. Geof, in finishing, thanked Cath (Hickey) for the wonderful job she had done as booking secretary.

BUCKBARROW - Paul Charnock immediately defended the loss shown in the Books. The income from the hut fees was only just recovering from the effects of the foot and mouth disease, and in any case, the fuel bill showed expenditure incurred in the previous year. This talk of calor gas reminded him that the calor gas cylinders had been moved out of the kitchen and were now next to the chapel. As for the canoe which had appeared, members could draw their own conclusions as to its seaworthiness (or otherwise), but the kind donor had had the foresight to provide two life-jackets and a bailer. He reminded members of the ruling on portable radios - no radios are allowed if other members or their guests are in residence. In finishing, he would like to ask any members with any complaints (about the hut) to get in touch with him. When asked about the prospects of buying Buckbarrow, he replied that the club had heavy commitments in other directions, and he could not foresee us buying it in the near future.

TYN TWR - John Foster reported that full planning permission had been obtained last July, and on receiving this, a specification had been drawn up for the full conversion and put out to tender. This had proved to be so expensive, however, that he was now hoping to get much of the interior work (plumbing and decorations etc.) done by club members - and a new tender had been put out and accepted, for the installation of a septic tank. He was hoping to have all the work done through the summer, so that the hut should be available for general use in the Autumn.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - There were only two nominations for the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman, so both Bill Carter and Terry Hickey were automatically re-elected to their former positions. For the position of Secretary, there were two nominations, T.P. Brodrick and B. Hayes. On a card vote, Tom Brodrick was elected. For the vacant position of committee member, Mick Pooler was elected in a card vote choosing between Mick and Derek Price.

/The New



The New Committee is now:-  
 PRESIDENT Rt. Rev. T.B. Pearson

CHAIRMAN	W. F. Carter	HUT WARDENS: BISHOPSCALE	J.B. Ayre
SECRETARY	T. P. Brodrick	BUCKBARROW DUNMALL	P. Charnock
VICE CHAIRMAN	T. Hickey	TYN TWR	J. Foster
TREASURER	J. Cooper	DUNMALL	G. CROSS

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: J. Gilmour  
 N. Haigh  
 M. Pooler

BULLETIN EDITOR : R. Witham

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - The Meeting gave its formal approval to leave all the arrangements for the dinner in the hands of the Committee. It is expected, however, that this will be at about the same time of year, and it is hoped that it will once again be at The Red Lion.

The Annual General Meeting was declared closed, and refreshments were served.

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#### The A.R.C.C. Climbing Group

D. GRACE

As some of our members may know, Mick Pooler is trying to build up a regular "climbing" team ..... a group which at present consists largely of "extremely easy" leaders - ed.)

It is hoped, now that the General has stepped down, that we will have some International matches to look forward to. Do you remember the Cup Final earlier this decade when the Central Pillar of Frenez fell to a British team who beat the home team by a good few feet and a top rope. This in spite of the tragic loss of a certain Mr. Whillan's Cap. If all goes well, we ourselves should be able to field a fairly strong team in Chamonix during September this year. Mountains such as the 'M', may possibly fall. (It would be a lot easier to climb it that way.) If anybody is interested in an away game, please contact Mr. Cross, our trainer and road manager, as he is rooting around for more players and transport.

For the past few months, Mick has been working hard to complete our new cottage, which he acquired under the pretext of getting wed in the Autumn. It will have full central heating, and is situated in the Bury area. There are many reasons for the purchase of a cottage in this spot, but the main advantage is its great distance from the Lakes and Wales. We are also overjoyed at the apparent lack of crags and outcrops in its near vicinity.

Lately, some of us have been meeting in the 'New' after breakfast, where talk of the previous evenings hardships has prevailed,

"Do you know, it was after seven when I got to a bar last night."

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LATE NEWS - Rumour has it that the Rock and Ice have one of their star players on the transfer list - some Hoke named Brown. Our manager has a meeting with their board arranged for sometime in the near future to haggle about fees.

/I have

I have had passed on to me, a letter from the Secretary of the Climbing Club of Tasmania, Mr. J. C. Moore, and so that I can print all the letter, I have taken the unusual step of splitting it into two parts. Part 1, below, should be of interest to all our members, whilst part 2 will probably be of more specialised interest. I apologise in advance for all the spelling mistakes.

### CLIMBING IN TASMANIA

Tasmania is an essentially rugged Island, and although the mountains rarely exceed 5,000 ft. in height many of them are of impressive structure. The climate and hence vegetation can be divided into two major sections. Due to the prevailing westerly air stream, the Western and Central sections of Tasmania receive high rainfalls of around 100", and some West Coast areas up to 150" annually. This results in dense cold temperate rain-forest predominating in areas below 3000 ft. The East coast, however, is a more mediterranean climate with a rainfall of 20 - 30 " with a sclerophyl vegetation as climax. The higher Western areas have an Austral Montane vegetation which approximates to the Patagonia type of Alpine vegetation.

This has an obvious effect on climbing, since activity in the west is limited to areas above 3,000 ft., where the rock protrudes above the all prevailing forest. As many of these areas are remote from civilization, a climbing trip takes on an expedition-like quality requiring airdrops, and death marches of up to five days. Climbing is at all times quite serious in this environment, as the results of a fall could be disastrous due to the length of time required to extricate casualties. The weather is at all times unpredictable and the average of one good day in three is standard for summer months.

The rock itself is quartzite or allied schists, which is almost exclusively very sound. Availability of protection varies, but is generally from fair to excellent. Only one of the mountains, Federation Peak, requires climbing ability to reach its summit but none are an afternoon stroll. The cliffs range in height from 1700 ft. down to whatever you consider worth climbing. Federation and Frenchman's Cap are the only centres which have received any amount of attention in this area and hold about 30 climbs between them. The North West face of Federation is the most outstanding - 2,100 ft. of climbing of about hard severe standard (probably good English V.S.). There are many major unclimbed faces remaining, the best of which is the East Face of Frenchman's. 1000 ft. high, it will be largely mechanical and many parties are plotting its doom for this summer.

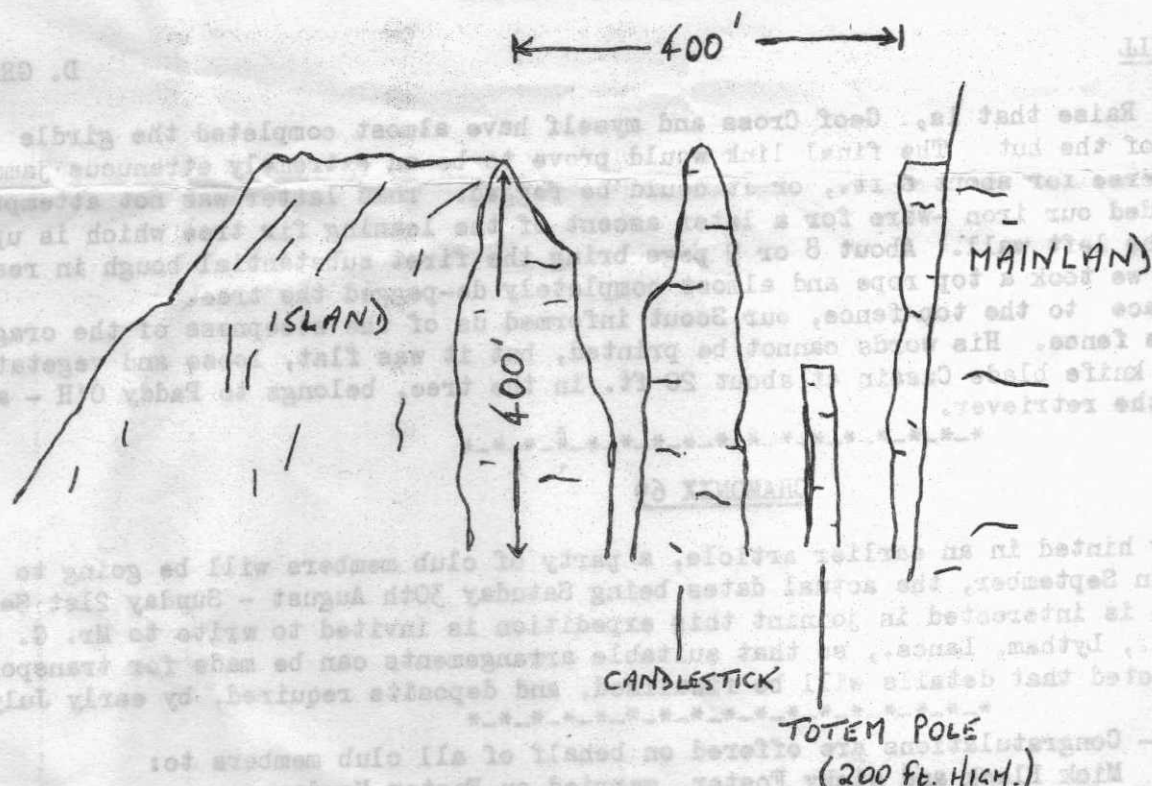
Probably the most attractive climbing area is the Cradle Mountain - Lake St. Clair National Park, which is more centrally situated, has a lower rainfall and is on the edge of the Dolerite Sill which encompasses Tasmania outside the South West and West. The vegetation gives way to rock at a generally lower level, and the place is more accessible, easier to move around in, supplied with huts (which are non-existent in the S.W. and W.), has less thick scrub and is generally more desirable. However, the climbing lacks the seriousness and expedition-like quality of the quartzite areas. Cliffs are from 500 ft. to 1000 ft. and incredibly abundant. The Geyon area is the most frequented, and some of the better climbs are "Titan" - 1,300 ft. A3 V Sup - a very steep route with 500 ft. of pegging; "Prometheus" - 1,400 ft. A1 VI Inf; "Gates of Eden" - 700 ft. VI Inf - a largely technical exercise on rock very similar to Chamonix Granite. The last pitch is a 50 ft. vertical layback on a superb edge - the crux being a desperate lunge for the summit jugs when the crack runs out. Dolerite areas are very extensive and vary widely in structure and size. The most frequented cliff is the Organ Pipes on Mount Wellington, 9 miles out of Hobart, a very steep 300 ft. columnar structure.

With daylight saving, after work climbing is popular, but mostly confined to the sandstone edges which abound the fringes of the city. Many parties, however, still risk the /almost



inevitable benightment on the boulder scree of the mountain.

The coastal cliffs of the Tasman Peninsular on Capes Raoul, Huay and Pillar, are largely untapped, climbing being confined to Peak Bagging of various unclimbed pinnacles, Cathedral Rock, the Pillars of Hercules, the Candlestick and the Totem Pole. The latter two are of principal interest and difficulty. Both are situated in the island chain of Cape Huay (alias The Lanterns). The Candlestick was climbed by a flying fox technique utilizing an adjacent island, hydrogen balloons, a .270 Mauser Rifle with telescopic sights and ..... that that's a long story. The Totem Pole was 200 ft. of RURPS, Skyhooks and tied off Knife Blades.



Cape Pillar is 1000 ft. of vertical Dolerite in very impressive surroundings and there are literally miles of 700 ft. cliffs at Cape Raoul.

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#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Were due on April 1st, although membership continues until July 1st. However, Members who have not paid their subscriptions by July 1st will be deemed to have resigned from membership of the club. Anyone who has not yet renewed their membership, therefore, is advised to write immediately to the

"Subscriptions" Secretary, Nev. Haigh, at:

752, Devonshire Road,

Norbreck,

Blackpool

enclosing a cheque or postal order for 30/-; payable to Achille Ratti Climbing Club - Main Account.

Please Note - that there is a waiting list for membership of the club and so the "July 1st" rule will be rigidly enforced.

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J. Tasker - for services to literature (Bishopscale Logbook) -

D. Grace - for services to the Club's plumbing.

A. Quinn and T. Bimson - for reasons known to themselves (and one or two others)-  
about which they are (quite rightly) keeping quiet.

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## D. GRACE

- Dunmail Raise that is, Geof Cross and myself have almost completed the girdle traverse of the hut. The final link would prove to be an extremely strenuous jammed hand traverse for about 8 ft., or it could be pegged. This latter was not attempted as we needed our iron -ware for a later ascent of the leaning fir tree which is up towards the left wall. About 8 or 9 pegs bring the first substantial bough in reach, from this we took a top rope and almost completely de-pegged the tree. After a race to the top fence, our Scout informed us of the steepness of the crag behind the fence. His words cannot be printed, but it was flat, loose and vegetated. P.S. The knife blade Cassin at about 20 ft. in the tree, belongs to Paddy O'H - a half pint for the retriever.

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As already hinted in an earlier article, a party of club members will be going to Chamonix in September, the actual dates being Saturday 30th August - Sunday 21st Sept. Anyone who is interested in joining this expedition is invited to write to Mr. G. Cross, 8 Lorne St., Lytham, Lancs., so that suitable arrangements can be made for transport. It is expected that details will be finalised, and deposits required, by early July.

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Mick Black and Nicky Foster, married on Easter Monday:

Ian (Fred) Gartside and Judith Black, married on Easter Tuesday;

with best wishes for every happiness in the future.

The Rydal Sheepdog trials will be held on 14th August.

The Grasmere Sports take place on the following Thursday, 21st August.

The New West Yorkshire Gritstone guide is expected to be on sale this Autumn - probably in September.

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The last week in March saw four club members (2 ropes - B. Hayes, P. Witham, G. Cross, R. Witham) venturing over the border into Scotland. Staying at the S.M.C. hut at Lagangarbh - in the 'shadow' of the Buchaille Etive Mor - they had two days brilliant weather before the clag above them drove them away. G. Cross, much to his surprise, contributed the following about the activities of "his" rope.

Old soldiers, it is said, never die - unfortunately, climbing stories do. The yawns of my friends had warned me that my Alpine epics were becoming rather well known, and that /I would



require new material before I could once again join in the After Dinner sessions at Bishopscale. With this in mind, I acted as chauffeur, driving past a certain "Small, but comfortable" hut, and into the wilds of Scotland.

The plan miscarried on the first day, as we rather overslept, so suffice to say that we ate well, had a gentle walk to the top of the Buachaille Etive Mor and then we ~~xxx~~ can gently draw a veil over the rest of the days proceedings. The next day began at 7 o'clock when the alarm went off, and fortified by the usual money saving breakfast, we set off in the pre-dawn gloom to look for our mountain. An hour and a half's walking and scrambling later, we halted at the foot of the white vertical gash that was Crowberry Gully.

The snow conditions were not very good - consisting of what can best be described as compacted powder. This "stuff" did not permit us to crampon directly up the slope, and as we were unable to kick steps, we thought we would be condemned to cutting a ladder of steps all the way up the gully. In fact, as we quickly discovered, a ladder of steps never quite described our achievement. As the sun hit the upper part of the gully, powder snow, in ever increasing volumes, began to hiss down around us, and we soon roped up - though we continued to move together. After 200 ft. we had to resort to climbing in pitches and in the next couple of hundred feet of alternate leading, the procedure became standardised as - cut a hold - re-excavate a foothold - foot into foothold - re-excavate the step you had just cut - cut a hold ..... The trouble being that the second had also to clear out the holds before being able to use them. - So much for our "ladder of steps".

The powder snow avalanches, however, had given way to a bombardment from small pieces of ice as we surveyed the first real problem; a short, icy crack, followed by a steep snow slope, then a 30 ft. ice wall. It was here that we almost met disaster - Geof was hit in the mouth by a piece of ice - and we had our first piece of luck. A few minutes spitting blood, with soothing phrases from Rod, sent Geof on his way again, and when Rod was "scorned" into leading the ice wall, he discovered that the holds left by previous parties were simply filled with frozen powder snow, and a judicious bit of excavating made them usable again.

So we continued to hack our way up the gully, until we eventually reached the foot of "the famous thincrack chimney". Two good chockstone runners (the only solid belays we had in the whole gully), and a crafty piece of ice sculpture soon had Rod at the foot of the next pitch; but this next pitch was what the guide book described as the criterion for the success of the whole route. A covering of snow-ice was required on the slabs to enable a traverse to be made and true enough the slabs WERE covered..... but what a covering ..... more like icing sugar than ice.

Still we were only 200 ft. from the top of the gully, and the thought of retreat made anything possible. It was getting late on in the day, but to try rushing things would have been fatal, so inch by delicate inch I worked my way out - out and up - until eventually it was Rod's turn to follow. Various odd phrases indicated that he didn't feel at all happy on such crumbly "snow-ice", and when he asked me to lead the next pitch - across the slabs again - I had little option but to agree. This, slowly and delicately, brought us to what the guide book calls the crux - The Great Cave Pitch.

Compared to the last two pitches, this was pretty straightforward ice climbing, so Rod - after mopping up all the water from the holds in the first 20 ft. - came down to give me the honour of leading off to the top. Well, it wasn't quite the top really, as there was still a hundred feet of gully and a couple of hundred feet of "scrambling" to reach the final summit, but we were able to untie and fold up the rope, and then with fresh  
/energy

energy coming at the sight of the summit, we ran and scrambled our way back to the hut.

The end of the expedition came as an anti climax, as through the night the clouds slowly built up and the brilliant weather of the previous few days turned into low cloud and sleet. We decided that we would much rather get wet in Langdale, so after a long lie-in wended our weary way back to the rejuvenating pies and pints at the 'New'.

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### CORRECTION

Please note that there was a mistake in the last edition of the Bulletin. The time of the Sunday Mass at Bishopscale is 8.15, and this will be, as stated, every Sunday throughout the year. As this is the official club Mass, members staying in Langdale are urged to attend.

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### 3rd. ANNUAL FELL RACE - SATURDAY AUGUST 9th.

The course, which now takes just under half an hour to run will be the same as last year - from the New - up Mill Ghyll to Stickle Tarn across to Pike How - then back via the New to finish at Bishopscale. Prizes are awarded to 1st 2nd and 3rd - so come along and give your support - even if its only vocal!

THERE WILL BE a "grand" Social Weekend at Dunmail - JUNE 14/15 - when it is hoped to find time to completely repaint the interior in time for the summer "season". This will probably be your last chance to see Gillie performing with the 6" brush, and you should also get another chance to see Geoff. doing his now famous imitation of a climber as he traverses the "Kitchen Korner".

It's another case of The More The Merrier - and the easier the work - so please help in this serious attempt to prepare the hut for the summer visitors. If anyone has any large paint brushes (6" and over) please bring them along.

ONE FINAL APPEAL - members are asked to remember that the keyholders for the various huts play an important part in the smooth running of these establishments. Anyone who is visiting the huts midweek, and expects to arrive after dark, is asked to inconvenience the respective holders as little as possible - writing to ask that the key be left available.

Well that's it for this quarter - No prizes for spotting my (deliberate) mistakes - and I am sorry if the bulletin seems a little odd this month - things have been a little disorganized. I hope to have everything in better shape for the September version.

Sincerely,

EDITOR

Mr. R. Witham  
37, Canada Drive,  
Rawdon,  
LEEDS.  
LS19 6LU

Rod.

CLUB SECRETARY

Mr. T. P. Brodrick  
22, Fairfield St.  
ACCRINGTON

LATE NEWS The annual orienteering "race"  
held over until September/October!