

## ACHILLE RATTI CLIMBING CLUB

BULLETIN no 100

CENTENNIAL EDITION

JULY, 1986.

Dear Members,

Well here it is, the one hundredth edition of the Bulletin. Twenty-five years since Jack Thornton (alias Black Jack) whose picture, prodding a cherub with an ice-axe, adorns the Old Dungeon Ghyll wall, published the first bulletin in this form. Prior to that in the 1940s there was a Club Journal printed, something I would like to see revived. We have so many members writing good mountaineering articles that it would be great to see them in book form, if only paperback.

This bulletin is full of information, news dates, and the prior warning of the AGM, where this year I hope there will be a better attendance, now that we have so many new, vital and enthusiastic members.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sat Sep 20th: Three Shires Fell Race.

Sunday Sep 21st: THE CLUB FELL RACE - (A friendly race, for juniors, seniors and veterans.)

OCTOBER 4th. The Bishop's Sponsored Walk. To raise money for the Lake District Parishes. Held in Grizedale Forest, we organise it, helpers required. Joint meal at Bishopscale for helpers on Sat

OCTOBER 11th: Langdale Horseshoe Fell Race. Organised jointly by ARCC and Ambleside AC. Helpers required for the check points.

OCTOBER 18th: Annual General Meeting, Preston, Sat Afternoon 2pm.

OCTOBER 25/26th: Karrimor Mountain Marathon, entry forms to go back now.

NOVEMBER 8/9th: Bonfire weekend at Tyn Twr. Also a working weekend.

NOVEMBER 22nd: ANNUAL DINNER at the Waterhead Hotel, Ambleside.

### NEWS . . NEWS . . NEWS . . NEWS . . . . .

1. Once again I will be organising a bulk - order from Frank Davies Climbing Shop in Ambleside. This way we get twice the usual discount. It means a lot of work on both my part and Tim the Manager's part. There will be a duplicate receipt book left at the shop, when you order goods, or have them taken from stock and put into our box downstairs, you must make sure that the items and your name and address are entered in the book. Last year it was hell on earth trying to sort out the orders. Total value was almost £3,000, and that is quite an amount of gear. DO NOT PAY AT THE SHOP, I will have to work out the discount and let you know the final price. Goods will be collected on October 4th weekend, or soon after, from Bishopscale. When putting goods on one side state that it is for ACHILLE RATTI BULK ORDER, AND WRITE NAME, ADDRESS AND ITEMS IN THE BOOK.



NEWS . . NEWS . . NEWS . . cont....

2. I am still holding a pair of yeti gaiters ordered and paid for last year. If the owner does not want them I will use them myself.
3. It has been good to see so many mentions of ARCC in High magazine lately. We have a piece in the Club Notes, Sue and Marion attending the AGM of the BMC (British Mountaineering Council), Jayne Nicholson the super efficient secretary at that aforementioned body, and John Foster as Chairman of the BMC HUT in Glen Brittle.
4. GUESTS IN HUTS Just a reminder that full members are allowed to sign in two guests. This applies to all the huts. Graduate Members may not sign in guests. Children using the huts must be Junior Members, unless the special permission of the hut warden has been obtained.
5. When members book a party into a hut, the members must be included in the total number of the party. If the maximum party size is booked, and then four members are extra to that party, then it does cause some inconvenience to other members, particularly in the smaller huts.
6. The Annual Dinner is on 22nd November at the Waterhead Hotel, Ambleside. Tickets will cost £9 the same as last year, and will be available from Barry Ayre 23, Low Road, Halton on Lune, Lancaster. Please enclose a SAE for the return of your tickets. Chris Benji is sorting the menu, it sounds like roast beef and something; there will be a resident band, it costs more not to have them, and a coach will run from Bishopscale. Please book your coach seat when you buy your ticket, pay on the night, (for your coach seat)
7. We now have a total of 517 members. Last year only 13 members did not renew their membership. These are both record numbers.
8. For your special mountaineering or walking insurance telephone the BMC office in Manchester 061 273 5835 and ask for Jayne Nicholson. Tell her that you are a member of ARCC.
9. The British Mountaineering Council have again arranged special concessionary fares with National Express/Eurolines coaches. An International network covering the whole of Europe. For Example leave London Victoria Coach Station at 3pm arrive Chamonix 22hours later, cost £73 return.
10. You do not need to take out individual membership of the BMC to take advantage of these privileges, ARCC is a member club, and pays your subs for you. (Bus timetables are on Bishopscale windowledge)
11. Jackdaws in the roof. At last the babies have flown, and now it is possible to sleep in the ladies dorm in Langdale. Visitors have been known to stay awake all night, terrified of the dragging and scraping noises from the ceiling. Ghosts? Rats with clogs? Now our erstwhile chairman George, has climbed the ladder and fixed chicken wire over the holes, so that next year mummy and daddy jackdaw will be locked out. One of the nests inside is fully five feet tall, and needs removing. In future George will be known not as Partridge, but as St George and the Jackdaw/dragon? And a host of grateful maidens thank him!



NEWS . . . NEWS . . . NEWS cont...

12. The other Partridge who changed into Swan, Elizabeth and husband Bernard have left Cumbria and moved to 2, Aconamara, near Lochgilphead, Argyll. So if you find yourself around there do call and see them.
13. Helen Fanning had an accident and was very ill in intensive care for several weeks, but is now home and progressing well. Michael Foster had a badly broken leg before Christmas, now has the plaster off and is also recovering, though still hobbling. He is taking great care on the advice of his brother, in case it should 'snap like a carrot'. Dave Bates is still suffering with his broken ankle, but it hasn't held him back from the hard E's this year. Could we arrange an orthopaedic weekend, including Stu Evans to give Dave some hope?
14. Joyce Foster Bulletin Editor, is moving in early August to 4, Godwin Avenue, Blackpool. Home telephone number not known yet, but can be contacted at work if needed 0253 61321.
15. Climbing is now allowed at Sedgewick Bridge over the river Kent. It is faced with limestone and gives good traversing and boulder problems. Access has been negotiated between the landowners and the BMC. Crowds and dogs are to be discouraged.
16. Rita Baron of Stavely Post Office, has a lot of Tog 24 fabric for sale. It is superb material, the proper stuff, several colours, 60" wide, 50p per yard. A bargain for home gear makers. Fibre-pile sleeping bag liners, jackets etc. Call at Stavely Post Office on your way to Bishopscafe.
17. Joan Newby of Kingston, Waterhead, Ambleside friend of Rita Baron's will be delighted to accommodate you for the dinner weekend. B and B £8.50 per person.
18. Troll Safety Equipment are sponsoring a photographic competition. Two limestone guidebooks covering all peak limestone will be published early in 1987. Twenty colour photographs are included and needed.  
 Subject: Climbing action, interpreted as widely as you like, historic, classic or modern. Easy or hard, atmospheric or esoteric. . .  
 Entries: Colour transparencies, 35mm or large format. Mark each transparency with your name and address and send to:  
 Mike Browell, 46, Clifford Rd, Nether Edge, Sheffield S11 9AQ.  
 Last Entries 6th October, 1986.  
 Prizes: Troll will supply the winners with their own choice of gear from their range of climbing clothing and equipment to the following values. 1st Prize £100, Second Prize £60, Third Prize £40  
 Judging: All-star cast of Dennis Gray, Paul Nunn, Al Rouse and Geoff Birtles. Judging will take place on Sat 1st November at the Scotchmans Pack, Hathersage.



SECTION REPORTSFELL-RUNNING SECTION

They did it, they did it, they did it. . . . .

Yes, Derek Price Vice-Chairman, and Michael Pooler Committee Member completed The Bob Graham Round on June 7th in 23.30 approx. They did extremely well, and hearty congratulations are in order.

Two weeks later on the hottest day of the year Mike Lomas set off and reached Bowfell before severe cramps in his legs forced him to lose time. He struggled on to Dunmail, dehydrated and late and then retired. One month later he was back again and this time completed the round but not in the 24hrs. Disappointed but not disheartened there is always next year. . . . .

Grateful thanks from all three runners to their helpers. Without the support of friends and members and families, their runs would not have been possible. Frank Whittle deserves special mention for his superb compass work in appalling conditions; and Jim Harding for forming a new section on his own; the surgical application section. He spares no blushes! Congratulations. . . More thankyous to the helpers. Anymore next year? The support teams have it sussed now, raring to go, so get those bodies trained!

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CYCLING SECTION Went to Lewis for a week. The winds were very strong, it was just possible in bottom gear to make headway down steep hills. It is fortunate that Lewis is so boggy, more comfortable for landing when blown off the bike. The wild seascapes were superb, the waves so strong the earth moved.

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THE PAN-EATING SECTION are holding a meet at John Foster's on Skye. As John is uncertain whether he owns sufficient pans for a large group, please telephone him on 047 852 302. Polythene bowls will be taken on the ridge, as Tom Walkington considers the pans too heavy.

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THE LONDON SECTION

Neil Evans is the contact man for rock-climbing Tel: 01 434 ask for Trenchard House Section.

Pat Haley Tel: 01 641 3918 and John Parsons 01 668 3295 are together collating hill-walking activities.

They have decided to try and organise regular trips to the huts on a petrol-sharing basis, both to reduce travel costs and to know each other better. They hope to arrange social evenings somewhere in London in the not too distant future. A group weekend visit to Bishopscafe is planned for the weekend of Oct 4/5th, so if you are interested please phone the above number.

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SCOTTISH MEET 7th - 15th FEBRUARY 1987

The 16 beds in the MacIntyre Hut at Onich have been booked for 8 nights Sat to Sat inclusive. 8 nights at £2 per night. Places have also been booked in the CIC Hut on the Ben. Money due in October when meet leader John Foster will be back in Billinge. For further information if you can't wait, ring 047 852 302.

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MEALS ON WHEELS orFURTHER EXCITING ADVENTURES OF THE LONE RANGER AND A CHUCK WAGON

Despite the initial worries that there would be too few volunteers to provide support for the Long Walkers and Runners on this year's little jaunt across the fells, as usual, on the day, we were well covered. After a hectic couple of hours in the kitchen following an unwelcome and rude awakening by a loud 4.30am alarm, Carol and I arrived at Wythburn car park to find an anxious Dot running around yelling, "Where's the van? 'Cooker and bacon?" A minor misunderstanding meant that it was sitting at the Traveller's Rest; so a hasty retreat back over Dunmail Raise to the car park found a concerned Jim, who had been out scouting the highways for us, and the most welcome sight of one VW van. Frantic searching of the back of the van and we procured the keys, but just could not get the doors unlocked. Panic was mounting, keep calm. CALM! How when 41 very cold, very wet and doubtless very hungry LW/Rs were likely to be descending at any moment to a tea-less, bacon-less breakfast stop. Then success! The key turned and I was in the driving seat, but couldn't get r reverse gear no matter what. Cooperman was called to the rescue and intrepidly put his amazing muscle power to work between the wall and the van. Forcing just enough room for manoeuvre. So hi-ho Silver, away, and it was back to Wythburn in a race against time, the weather and jaywalkers on the annual Keswick/Barrow walk; all gripping stuff eh!

Low gas levels meant that cooking the goodies was a very slow process, everything seemed to be working against us this morning. So Anne Disappeared in a wall of spray to raid the local garage and replenish supplies. Eventually a huge mound of bacon was ready and keeping warm, water was boiling and piles of bread were buttered. Soon the Hobbits, or were they drowned water rats began to emerge in ones and twos, drips and drops from the wild woods in search of sustenance and the chance to take some respite from the evil weather.

By 9.30am the last of the band of reluctant heroines and heroes were kicked out of the transit, and off on their way, by the gallant support team, who showed no mercy whatsoever. As it had by now stopped raining, we brave volunteers had a cuppa and a bacon buttie feeling well pleased with ourselves.

Then it was back to the hut to clear up, bring order from Chaos once more, and to get the supplies for afternoon tea loaded safely aboard. Much spud-peeling, flan-making and other industrious tasks were impressively in progress, as meals on wheels once more hit the road and intrepidly negotiated notorious passes and other hazards, namely blind male drivers, sheep and an obtuse but by now mastered gear box - and all to make the rendezvous at Cockley Beck.

Here a much more leisurely service was provided for those LW/Rs who had not yet retired from the fray. This was much to the puzzlement and or amusement of the hoards of drivers passing to and from Hardknott. I think we must have been listed as 'Odd but worth seeing' local curiosity for the tourists to visit, stare at and tick off on their itinerary.

John Nixon was first through with only a brief 5 minute stop at 12.35; last through and taking a somewhat longer break were Mike Lomas and Phil Lord, who under 'trainers instructions' were putting in extra mileage for the Bob Graham. Everyone seemed to enjoy the soup, tea and butties, whilst the really miserly hunks of Cherry Genoa cake and the musical interludes deserve a special mention! Naturally if the weather had been just a little kinder the sunshades, table and



Meals on Wheels Cont...

... chairs, white tablecloths and napkins, china tea-service etc. would all have been beautifully laid out with the Palm Court Orchestra in attendance playing merry tunes under the trees. Fortunately rain stopped any such pretentious frivolity.

At some time in the afternoon an injured Mr J Britt esq. leapt out from a hijacked car after taking the Eskdale path by mistake. Two hours after he left us the police came to inform us that he was reported safe! yet again we had to exercise our hard and very cruel authority to eject forcibly, certain reluctant persons from the cosy confines of the transit; they did later redeem themselves.

Eventually the last four to retire arrived and we could all say goodbye to the grey indwelt wastes of Cockley Beck and head back to Bishopscote, a mere twelve hours or more after setting up and serving breakfast at Wythburn. On the way back we mercilessly tempted, with offers of a lift back to the hut, the now hardy souls who had earlier been unwillingly prized from their seats. They resolutely turned us down.

So ended yet another action packed day in the life of Achille Ratti Meals on Wheels. Thanks are due to everyone who took part on the road, in the hut, and out on the fells. Meanwhile if you want to hear more of this saga of extraordinary service on the fells and highways, you'll have to wait very patiently until 1987 for the next gripping installment. Lets hope the weather will be just a little kinder so that we can all turn a decent colour, the result of tanning rather than rusting!

Christine Benjamin

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THE KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOUR (SATIN)

Supporting one of our heroic runners one Saturday recently, after all night in the car, we pulled in at Langdale to rest and freshen up under our wonderful shower. Freda cleared up all the dirty pots and cups and prepared the support truck for off.

Fearing lack of sleep would catch me, I set off for Wasdale in plenty of time but rounding a corner on the steepest part of the Blea Tarn road, what did I find? Two stupid drivers (not female) had got their respective cars, a Roller and a Mercedes well and truly hooked together. Eventually after great difficulty, the long snake of traffic began to stop, start and manoeuvre.

My anxiety became obvious to the runner, nothing to do with our lot, in the car behind. I told my tale of woe and added my, by this time, slipping clutch.

"I'll get you through," said he. And hand on horn, hazard lights flashing the obstructing cars slid sideways onto grass, rock and bog.

But unused to the power, my knight in shining satin (running shorts) would keep stopping to tell oncoming drivers of our important mission. Stop, start all up Wrynose didn't help my smelling clutch. So on approaching Cockley Beck I decided I must leave him, I'd never manage Hardknott, so I went via Ulpha. If you should see a black MG Metro with flashing lights and a driver Wally Knight, give him my thanks and apologies, and tell him I was there in time.

Joyce Foster-Kent.



A WORLD OF PRIMITIVE DELIGHT by BARRY ROGERS

(An account of an ascent of the Orion Face Direct)  
3.3.86.

It was dark. Ten pitches of the magnificent Orion Direttissima lay below us now.

I was assured by Ian, as I followed a line of footsteps into a groove, that the belay was a good one. Well, good for this route anyway. The groove steepened and at twenty feet it bulged alarmingly.

Armed with two long-shafted axes, I was able to get good placements over the top. A quick heave, feet kicking frantically in the night, and I was up. I say up, but really I was there; that is why we climb, isn't it?

'There' was a snow arete below a short wall, and I could see that the next bit wasn't going to be easy. I aimed, and then I hurled my hand-held projectiles at, and above the offending obstacle. Metal hit rock, and there was a momentary flash of sparks in the gloom. Once again I launched an offensive at the wall; more sparks. Finally I admitted defeat. "I'll have to come down," I said. "I'll try further to the left".

Reversing the bulge was quite gripping, I could see my hands, but not my feet. Eventually I was back at square one, cursing myself for the waste of time. After a breather, I traversed left towards a huge chimney. At first it wasn't easy, but after about forty feet, the angle steepened considerably. I was quite relieved when I found a large rock-spike and nut runner at the start of the difficulties.

With lots of grunting, kicking, scraping, pushing and pulling, I got up and found the belay. The belay was a tremendous ear-shaped flake, which seemed to be part of the Ben. After making sure that I was firmly secured to the mountain I sat down, turned out my lamp and began to feel that we were winning the game.

I felt very happy sat there in the dark, taking in the ropes as Ian climbed on up. Occasionally, I was reminded that one of the ropes was getting under his feet, . . . . "Take the Blue rope in!" Eventually he arrived. "He's bound to curse me again," I thought, but instead "Good lead Youth," were the words he uttered. Taking the gear for the next pitch, he soon disappeared round a corner. Once more I sat there, watching his head-torch beam dancing on the slope above.

After a while I moved up a few feet, this enabling him to get a belay. "Climb when you are ready," he shouted.

"I'm on me way, me lad," I replied, as I climbed up the slope. Half way up I left a nut which had been tapped into a crack. Leaving it, I thought "Someone will appreciate that," so I gave it another tap for luck!

I continued on past Ian, climbed up one last steep bit in the cornice, and the belay was around a large cairn on the top of the North East Buttress. Within minutes Ian was with me, and we were shaking hands and grinning at each other in the storm. Then one at a time, we staggered along the crest of the buttress and with difficulty, found the summit shelter. We packed away all the gear except for one rope, which remained between us for the descent.

With the visibility down to only a few yards, we moved with great caution along the summit plateau, fully aware of the void only a short distance to our right. It was impossible to distinguish any of the gullies which we had previously used as descents. I had been on the top of the Ben a couple of times in the dark before, but had never experienced such atrocious conditions. Eventually, things started to go wrong, and we became completely disorientated. We decided that the only sensible thing to do, was to dig in; anything to get out of the wind. We took it in turns to do the excavating, when one began to get cold, the other took a rest. Unfortunately, after only six feet or so, we hit rock. Ian got in, and I squeezed in next to him. We lay there in our hole in the snow, staring at the ceiling only inches above our faces; but at least we were warm.



ORION FACE C ont...

Soon the warmth which had been achieved through frantic activity was lost. Ian began to shiver, and I too could feel the cold gnawing into my back and shoulder. We realised that if we didn't get ourselves valleywards, we would not survive the night and probably would not be found until summertime.

We crawled out of the hole. And crouching with backs to the storm, took a bearing in the general direction of the lochan to the east of Meall an Suidhe. Some body was looking after us that night. Very soon, we were heading down the Red B Burn and as the snow turned to rain we reached the Lochan. With the wind on our backs, we traversed around the base of Carn Dearg and descended into the Allt a Mhuilinn.

All that remained was the haul up to the hut. We reached it at two am, with the words, "We're alive, we're Alive!"

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THE NUCLEAR PICNIC

by

SEAN, UMA and PETER RAMNATH - O'NEILL

We had a picnic between two Magnox nuclear power stations on Bank Holiday Monday. From the met reports afterwards, the Chernobyl fallout cloud must have reached our nuclear family on the bank holiday afternoon. We made the sandwiches with Chinese lettuce from Lee's Co-op supermarket on Anglesey. The Welsh lamb from one of the two butchers in the village, was well through the abbatoir before the nuclear accident, and before we put it in the oven. We chose our picnic spot deliberately, but rather at the last minute after a lazy morning in the sun at the back of Tyn Twr. The choice was deliberate, because our picnic spot at the top of the mountain had tempted us for nearly a decade.

Dinorwic is one of the engineering wonders of the world, partly because of the brilliant simplicity of its design, partly because the creation of energy at Dinorwic symbolises man's pursuit of perpetual motion. The power harnessed is as old as the atom. Dinorwic is nature's answer with man's assistance, to the nuclear power stations which lie almost equi-distant to its east and west. This is alternative energy at its safest and most economical.

It is worth contrasting the Dinorwic hydro-electric station which helps cope in seconds with our breakfast and tea-time power surges as the kettles go, with its nuclear neighbours.

In Iceland, the government is selling Hydro-power expertise around the world, and is ready to pay industry to come to Iceland and use it - that is why Aluswiss is there with a big aluminum plant. Their emphasis was on hydropower from the beginning and they now have safety benefits. The CEGB argues of course that there is no way you could use Dinorwic as a mainstream power station and that it is only a surge back up. Tell that to the Icelanders about general hydropower. Dinorwic, the CEGB told me, produces 1800 megawatts, the two Welsh nuclear plants less than that between them. Dinorwic cost £450 million, figures are not available for the other two and the decommissioning cost will be fearful - you cannot lock the door and throw away the key of a nuclear power station, when it is old and worn out.



The Nuclear Picnic    Cont.....

. . . . Sean is ten. His photo appeared on the pages of the 'Guardian' in 1983 in an article entitled "Now it's Bobo's chance to make the diagnosis". Bobo is his nickname. The article was about how modern general practice had wrecked his kidneys (they ignored his vomiting for two months and said it was teething), and how hospital medicine saved his life and what was left of his kidneys. It was about the dilemma of the twentieth century. It was said in that article, which I wrote to coincide with publication of a book called Health Crisis 2000, that maybe his generation would take to the streets to prevent nuclear risk.

"I'll carry the rucksack," Bobo said. The bag had our lamb and lettuce sandwiches, waterproofs, tea and trail mix, apples and a bottle of water for him to drink because of his kidneys. A couple with a two year old toddler set off just in front of us up the one track CEEGB access road which zigzags up the side of the mountain to our unseen hidden pool of power. Behind us were another couple with a shoulder-carried baby. It could have been a spring pilgrimage. It takes one hour and twenty minutes of a slow walk to the top of the road. Sean was anxious "Is this a nuclear power station?" he kept asking. Wylfa lay miles behind us. I have never known a building, even the Ljublyanka in Moscow, which seemed to burn its presence into the back of my head. I left Sean and Uma straggling behind pressed on up between the scattered sheep on the mountain bog on one side and the hills of broken slate blocks, laced with quartz on my right.

We had stood at Wylfa's front door only twenty four hours earlier. It looks like a big warehouse no domes, just landscaped trees and an open road entrance with a sign inviting sightseers to drive in to the information point or take a guided tour. We did not go in. It undoubtedly provided, and continues to provide local employment, but we wondered why so many houses and grand estates were up for sale along this coast some 4 hours by boat from the Emerald Isle. It is also, and no doubt the nautical experts have the measurement for it, in the line of the currents which bring radioactive waste down the Cumbrian coast past Blackpool, Preston and Liverpool from Sellafield. Sean first set his feet on the fells near Windscale from Buckbarrow.

At Seascale, fortunately we've only walked along the beach and never swum in the sea which always seemed so rough when we were there

Only when I got to the top, well behind Pete, did I realise how cleverly that slope had taken the natural contours to become the side of a long dam as I looked down at the water in as near a circle as you can get in a mountain tarn. I noticed a smooth black tar which had been used on the concrete ramp right down to the water 'ssedges to protect it from the rain and snow. It's probably the same tar that the soviet firemen were trapped in as it melted under them at Chernobyl.

Pete knew that if he could climb to the top of the scree slope through the pocket of winter snow he might be able to see the other Magnox power station to the East. He had been there on a scorching hot day when sympathetic pickets of miners lolled on the grass outside and successfully convinced a truck driver to turn back with no violence or acrimony.

At the tunnel entrance we spread out our picnic and opened the flask of tea to enjoy our mystery pool to ourselves sheltered from the wind. The lake was absolutely smooth yet we were sitting literally on top of a massive 20th century power machine. At the flick of a switch, one man could send 400 tons of water a second plunging vertically through the heart of the mountain into the smooth tunnel races where it would strike the turbine blades to produce instant electricity.



The Nuclear Picnic Cont....

. . . . . I really wonder whether it is still too late to invest as heavily in wave, wind and water power for the 21st century. Other countries are. And there will be plenty of watts for those who want it, decommissioning the nuclear plants as they end their useful life.

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A TRIPPER'S DAY ON THE HILL

by

ROY PHILLIPS

Some ten years ago on a bright cloudless March morning, I set out to walk the tops of Liathach, that magnificent hill in the Torridon area of the Scottish Highlands.

The enjoyable amble along the airy ridges during this East to West crossing being brought to a sudden halt when faced with a traverse of the Northern Pinnacles, to reach Meall Dearg from the summit of Mullach an Rathain.

I found the crumbly nature of the rock plus the many vegetated ledges and sudden drops, just too much to handle, and had to return to the main ridge rather shaken and thoroughly chastened. The two rock apes who were my companions that day were little, if at all affected by the traverse. They skipped nimbly out to and back from the top in question, and on the descent via the stone-shoot, although very little was said about my refusal, I had the feeling that my status for future hill sorties had been reduced to that of a tripper.

Since that time, I have managed to top just about half of the Munros and Tops, and on recently returning to the Torridon area, decided to try again to top Meall Dearg by any route other than the original aborted one. An outline sketch in the Northern Highlands guide gave me some heart, as it indicated a low point on the ridge which seemed to be reachable from Coire na Caime and with no apparent reason to tangle with the dreaded pinnacles, which had by now in my imaginings reached fearsome proportions.

So I set forth on my proposed back door route on a showery day in May, with very low cloud and not a lot of hope, to wend my way via Coire Dubh from the Ling Hut up into the Coire. The cloud began to lift and the conditions improve as I progressed, and on reaching the mouth of the Coire the North ridge suddenly loomed large, magnified in the thinning mist, and then dramatically the tops cleared to reveal the soaring north facing crags of Liathach, starkly framed by their snow choked gullies to present a breathtaking aspect, with an accompanying feeling of puny insignificance. I moved higher into the Coire and it was then that I discovered that I had only one gaiter, having lost the other one somewhere en route. On rounding the final buttress I realised that there were now no serious obstacles to thwart me, so after kicking up the final couple of hundred feet on steep snow, I found myself looking down the western side of the ridge, and the top within very easy reach, which I was quickly atop, like a modern ancient Greek, with only one gaiter.



A trippers day cont....

..... I gave thanks for my safe deliverance, and for the fact that I didn't have to climb back to the main ridge. Then as it was my grand-daughter Caroline's birthday that day, her seventh, I built a small cairn to commemorate the two events. After a few moments of quiet contemplation I began the descent and arrived back safely into the lower coire, after an exhilarating glissade to enjoy a celebratory tea-party on the edge of one of the lochans. Coire na Caimhe is a place of solitude rather than loneliness. A place that I felt most reluctant to leave, until a blather of hail shattered the peacefulness and hastened my departure hutwards. I was surprised when returning through the Coire Dubh to find my lost gaiter on a prominent boulder, but my gast was really flabbered when the gaiter finder turned out to be not only one of our party, but one of the gymnastic duo who had accompanied me ten years before. Maybe just a mediocre day for the rock-apes, but what a day for a tripper!

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FIRST WINTER ASCENT OF CENTRAL BUTTRESS ON SCAPELL

As

by

TONY BRINDLE

As Adrian teetered around the corner towards 'Moss Ghyll Grooves', it was the surreality of it all that struck me most. Here we were, after three years of thinking about it, into our second day of actually transposing a dream into reality. Scafell's Central Buttress in winter, was quite definately on.

We hadn't known each other then, but three years earlier, we had both been keen to have a look at C.B. as it is affectionately known. Both of us were amazed, that this the greatest of the Lake District Classics, had not been attempted in winter. Why not? After all, it was first climbed in 1914.

One of my reasons for working at Eskdale OBMS last summer, was its close proximity to many of the major mountain crags of the Lake District. It was here that I met Adrian Moore. Training hard, we discovered how close our thoughts were on future climbing; inevitably Scafell, and more importantly C.B. were discussed. Around this time, those who knew us well, retreated to a discreet distance, announced us "Very likely barny," and refused to talk about anything remotely connected with Central Buttress. We remained undeterred, and started scheming.

I had been to the infamous 'flake' only once, with Christine Benjamin. My large boots had made more of an impression than Christine's rubbers, it had been a wet day, so we had made a quiet retreat. Adrian had actually climbed the routetwice Once solo, an act he will not be repeating. The wet summer of 1985 conspired to keep us away from Scafell until one night at the beginning of winter. If you have ever sat atop Scafell on a moonlight night, you will appreciate what a magical place it can be. We had got there via Deep Ghyll on one of those rare . .



Central Buttress Cont.....

... evenings that come occasionally into our lives if we must seize the opportunity.

Early February saw me in Scotland, and Adrian on C.B. He made it to the Flake, but it took him most of the day, and he certainly didn't want to lead the whole route. We made provisional arrangements for March, when the days are a bit longer, and the weather possibly a bit more settled. We arranged to rendezvous at Bishopscale and drove round to Eskdale with plans to climb 'for as long as it takes'.

Saturday March 1st was a beautiful day, but with a wind that cut through to the bone. We stood at the base of the route feeling akin to David when faced by Goliath. Dressed in duvets we were still cold, and we hadn't even started climbing. Four hours later we at the 'Oval' drinking coffee. The Flake rose above us looking exactly as it must have done in 1914, a very interesting proposition. We had already decided that this would most likely be a rock pitch, and so it had to be done in boots and gloves. Not the easiest of pitches, it was none the less an easier proposition than the previous two, although a certain amount of imagination and indeed luck, were required to protect it. Bridging in large boots worked far better than laybacking, and sitting on the chockstone seemed a very good place to practice the art of rope-throwing. Suffice it to say that a top-rope proved to be advantageous here, and lots of padding for the ensuing 45 feet of 'a cheval' to Jeffcoats Ledge. Jeffcoats being the only available bivi site, we opted for abseiling off and then returning in the morning. The lower pitches had convinced us that our earlier idea of climbing through the night was simply not on, an unknown terrain of this standard anyway.

Sunday saw us on top of Scafell by 10am, in the sun and with no wind what so ever, absolutely glorious. The abseil required two ropes tied together, so we were both very relieved to arrive at Jeffcoats Ledge having by-passed the knot en route. Adrian was leading the 'even' pitches, so he set off up the first easy pitch so far, up a nice slabby ramp to a superbly positioned belay on the edge. The following pitch traverses delicately back across the face, and was brilliant requiring steadiness from both leader and second, as the protection though good is widely spaced. Which brings me back to a steadily receding Adrian, as he teeters around the corner.

This the penultimate pitch, was yet another traverse and provides a fourth grade 6, out of a total of seven pitches. As I follow it friends shout from below, asking me to pose for photographs, and then they disappear towards the valley. I glance at Adrian, he tells me that the next pitch is common to 'Moss Ghyll Grooves', and leads to the top of the crag. He looks how I feel, a quietly suppressed exterior shielding a wildly ecstatic feeling from breaking forth prematurely. We know we have cracked it, but the top awaits.

At 16.00hrs on March 2nd we shake hands as we start coiling the ropes at the end of a weekend, that will remain in our memories as two of the hardest consecutive days winter climbing we have ever had. We had created probably the most serious undertaking, and certainly the hardest, south of the border, and raised Central Buttress back to its one-time lofty perch, of 'The Route'.

NB. No pegs used for belays or protection, in order to protect the summer lines.



## YOU GET MORE OUT OF LLYN BRENIG THAN JUST WATER

by

JOHN FOSTER

No, it is not a newly discovered lake in Snowdonia, but a reservoir of the Welsh Water Authority. What interest is it to a climbing club? Peripheral, but worth while.

It was about a dozen or so years ago while driving over Denbigh Moors to or from Tyn Twr that I became aware of a new dam being built. To serve the construction traffic, a new road B4501 was provided, by upgrading an ancient trackway, of which parts are still visible. Nearly 20 years earlier, I had become acquainted with the area while on night exercises with the RAF. It is not country any sane mountaineer would choose to walk in, day or night, but we had a sadist with stripes on his arm. Admitted, aircraft don't only crash on the high mountains, and rescue teams have to go out when they prang in any wild country. So there was little interest there on my part until recently. It was in February 1985 that our chairman sent out the first X-Country Ski Newsletter. Included was an information sheet from the W.W.A. about Nordic Ski trails around Llyn Brenig. Phone numbers were given to check conditions with the rangers, from December until March. Whether anyone tried them I don't know.

Going down alone to Tyn Twr one Friday morning last October; I can't help bragging about my new freedom. I decided to have a look at the trails around the reservoir. The construction offices have been furnished as a Visitor Centre, and with no one around, I had the undivided attention of the Head Ranger. When I mentioned ski-ing he told me that they only kept one road to the centre cleared for access and that the others were left to collect snow cover. If anyone tries them next winter perhaps they could report to George as Ski co-ordinator.

But there is much else there than limited ski-ing. Before any modern construction can be planned, detailed knowledge of the geology of the area is necessary. The whole environment needed to be thoroughly researched. Obviously rainfall, the size of the catchment area and its nature, are of prime interest if a dam is to be worth while. Bare rock and shallow soils soon shed water while vegetation and peat retain it. And the wild life had to be considered too. The "wetland" on the reservoir's northern shores has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by the Nature Conservancy Council. Here are 130 species of plants, some of them rare. And our ancestors were there long ago, long before Telford built the A5. From the Mesolithic Age around 7,500 to 5,000 years ago, intermittently up to the Iron Age just before Christ. Ancient sites were known and had to be thoroughly investigated before some were permanently drowned. Much of this work was directed by Frances Lynch of the Archeology Department of the University in Bangor, whom many of you know from attending Mass in Bethesda.

The findings of all these investigations are illustrated in the Centre, with some of the artifacts. Diagrams and leaflets are available to help you to follow the various trails. There is also fishing, sailing, skin diving and canoeing available.

Now I don't expect members to make a special trip to Llyn Brenig but I do suggest that it is worth while calling in, especially for those with children

(Continued overleaf.)



Llyn Brenig Cont....

going down for a few days in the summer. Even on a weekend it is worth a visit if the clag is down on Sunday.  
 From the North take the A543 from Denbigh, turn left just before the Sportsmans Arms on the B5401. From the midlands, leave the A5 at Cerrigydrudion and follow the B5401 from the other end.

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FOR SALE

MacInnes Peck Ice-Axe £18  
 Salewa Ice Hammer £7

Tel: 0524 811162

Phil Michelewski may be giving up, but he says hes got too much gear!

WANTED Clog Vulture Hammer - Same as above

--O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O--

THANKYOU

To all contributors to this bulletin, the next one is due out before Christmas. (Should have been September, but we've got a bit out of sync), so please let me have articles, news and information by AGM weekend Oct 18th.

Thankyou to Fr David Lannon for his hard work in printing and posting the bulletin, the job has doubled since he started helping. So many new members and so much moving around, we must hold records in the number of flittings per person. Now we have so many members in the South I will translate - moving house.

--O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O--

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ACHILLE RATTI CLUBBING CLUB

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD

Saturday, 18th October, 2pm.

Marion House, Knights of St Columba Hall, Beech Street, Preston.

Members approaching Preston from the North, East and South, leave the M6 at junction No 31 and pass the Tickled Trout. At the island at the top of the hill, fork right, following ring road A5085 Blackpool sign. After crossing the A6 by the park, cross four further sets of traffic lights. At the fifth set, turn left into Tulketh Road, then next left into Beech St/Gr. Marion House is on the left, and the bar should be open.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the last AGM held November, 1985
2. Matters arising.
3. President's Report.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Secretary's Report.
6. Treasurer's Report.
7. Reports from the Hut Wardens.
8. Election of Officers and Committee Members.
9. Any other business.

MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED at the AGM, other than those on the Agenda, should be notified to the secretary by any two members within the seven days prior to the meeting, ie: 11th October.

THE LAST DATE BY WHICH alterations/amendments to the constitution may be submitted to the Secretary is 8 weeks prior to the AGM., and the secretary must advise members of these proposals by two weeks prior to the AGM.

Nominations are invited for the positions of TREASURER, SUBSCRIPTIONS-SECRETARY, and for one ordinary COMMITTEE MEMBER.

All Hut Wardens and the Bulletin Editor are appointed by the Management Committee for a period of three years. Members willing to serve in these positions are at liberty to offer their services.

VOTING Only FULL MEMBERS AND LIFE MEMBERS are eligible to vote at the AGM. Graduate members and junior members have no voting rights, but are welcome to attend.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE must be received by the Secretary by 4th October, and proposers may be required to introduce the Nominee to the meeting.

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR CLUB, AND ATTEND THE AGM.