

the FellFarer

*Number 80
January 2016*





Editorial

Well, here it is : the last newsletter in this format. You will find that the past and the future are given a mention on pages 4 and 5. The future is what is important: please read the article carefully and act (if you need to - most members don't) to secure your future newsletters.

Please be assured that I will do my best to keep everyone informed of club activities but you must ensure that you have your end of the delivery process in place.

On a more general note, there will still be a place in future newsletters for members to share their memorable experiences outside the events organised by the club. Many of the best articles in the past have been about those days, weeks, or even months when members have created their own adventures. I hope that will continue.

One last big "THANK YOU" to all those people who have helped by contributing their words and pictures over the years, including (in this issue): Norman Bell, Joan Abbott, Colin Hunter, Sarah Jennings and Kevin Ford.

ED.

Cover Photograph:

*Ascending to Allcock Tarn on a Midweek Walk
Wednesday 26th November 2015.*

Photo: Norman Bell

Deadline for the next edition: There isn't one!

OUR PARTNERS

- BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

BMC Website: www.thebmc.co.uk

Each Fellfarer has an individual Membership Number

- RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION

Ramblers Website: www.ramblers.org.uk

Fellfarers RA Membership Number: New Number TBA

- OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
(Reciprocal Rights Partnership)

Oread Website www.oread.co.uk

OREAD huts are available to Fellfarers at the following rates:

Tan-y-Wyddfa

Rhyd-Ddu,
North Wales.
O.S. Grid Ref. 570527

Fellfarers: £5.00 p.p.p.n., Guests: £9.00 p.p.p.n.

Heathy Lea Cottage

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Fellfarers: £4.50 p.p.p.n., Guests: £6.50 p.p.p.n.

Oread Booking Secretary:

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High House (and farm) Postcode:	CA12 5XJ
High House OS ref: (Explorer OL4)	GR 235119
High House Guest Night Fees:	£5 p.p.p.n.

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This newsletter is also available on the club website
Some back issues are available on request from the Editor



THE FELLFARER

MAY 1996

RETURN OF THE LIMESTONE LINK-BY POPULAR DEMAND!

The next Fellfarers walk-meal is an old favourite -with a difference! Yes, it's the Limestone Link -the other way round!

The bus leaves Blackhall road at 9.30. sharp (standard service) on SATURDAY 8th. JUNE for KIRKBY LONSDALE. The fare is £2.40 per person.

Guides for the walk will be distributed on the bus to those who want them. The walk, from Kirby Lonsdale to Arnsdale, is between 14 and 17 miles long (depending on who you talk to) in some of the most beautiful limestone scenery in the country.

Food and drink will be available at the Fighting Cocks in Arnsdale upon completion of the walk.



Some Fellfarers on a recent Walk-meal

A bus will return us to Kendal at 9.00 p.m. (time to be confirmed), at cost of £2.00 per person.

WELSH MEET

21st-23rd June at Rhydd-ddu. NOT MANY PLACES LEFT. Contact Rod now on Kendal 733362 if you are interested



HIGH HOUSE

IS RESERVED FROM 24TH. MAY TO 2ND. JUNE FOR FELLFARERS OF ALL DEGREES OF NOISENESS AND FROM 14TH TO 16TH.

JUNE
FOR
QUIET
FELL-
FARERS
(AND
NOISY
FAMILIES)

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Forthcoming events:
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
1. Picnic at the Hardraw Force
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Bands concert
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
2. Treasure Hunt
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
(on foot of course) in
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Kendal.
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
Both dates to be announced
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
soon.
☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

GUESTS

The committee is concerned that some members are inviting guests to stay at High House free of charge. You are reminded that the cost is £3. per person per night, payable to any committee member but especially to the treasurer, Val Calder (tel. Kendal 727109)

The Past :

You might say that this (*see left*) is where it all began. The very first issue of 'The FellFarer', published in May 1996.

Well, not quite. Perhaps it really began more than 50 years before that when Sid Cross produced the first edition of 'The K FellFarers Journal'. The primary purpose then was to allow those members who were overseas, fighting in the Second World War, to stay in touch with each other and with the club. It was to be an annual publication featuring articles, stories, poems and photographs of the diverse activities and interests of club members.

Coincidentally the year of publication, 1944, was the 10th anniversary of the club and also the year in which ownership of the Seathwaite valley, including High House, passed to the National Trust. *

Sadly, the Journal ceased to be after only three editions. The editor, Sid, had moved away and perhaps with the ending of the war, members had many other things on their minds.

There were two other short-lived attempts to create a regular newsletter: by Bryan Stilling in 1961 and then, a committee initiative to reach the growing number non-K shoes members, in 1971.

Fast forward to 1996 and the club was advertising events by poster pinned up in the K factories and posted to members. The present editor had been helping the Social Secretary with those posters and decided to produce one in a newspaper format. **

It was formatted on an early works computer. Photographs were not possible; the illustrations were pasted on to a paper print and printing was done on the office duplicator. It was well received and quickly became a quarterly publication, increasing from a single page to its regular 20 page (give or take 4 pages) format.

Twenty years later, it's time to move on, time to go digital. The editor is still committed to keeping club members informed, though. Please read the article at the bottom of this page.

* Incidentally (1):

1944 was also the year of the first club slideshow, a 'lantern lecture' given by Sid Cross (with slides borrowed from the Fell and Rock Climbing Club) which proved to be so successful that a fortnightly series was held, including one in which members' snapshots were shown through an epidiroscope. The technology has changed but not much else!

** Incidentally (2):

Did you notice the guest night fee of £3 shown in the 1996 newsletter? After 20 years that fee has only risen to £5. Surely an further increase must be long overdue?

The editor used an online inflation calculator (*Hargreaves Lansdown*) to see how much £3 in 1996 is worth today.

The answer is £5.18p ! Who'd have thought it?

The Future :

**NOTE THAT THIS ONLY APPLIES TO CLUB NEWSLETTERS;
ALL FORMAL NOTIFICATIONS (eg for the AGM)
WILL CONTINUE TO BE SENT TO MEMBERS BY POST.**

FOR THOSE WITH EMAIL:

By the time you receive this newsletter you should also have received an email with a trial "new" newsletter attached.

If you have received the email and can open and read the attached newsletter, that is fine; you need do nothing more. You will continue to receive future newsletters in that format.

Please contact the Editor as soon as possible if:

1. You have email but have not received the trial newsletter. We may not have your current email address on our file.

2. You have received the email but can't open the attachment. It is in the form of a pdf. This is a common format, the one in which the "old" newsletters was sent to the printer and to the website.

Let the editor know if you have difficulties and he'll advise you. You may need to download a pdf reader (available free from the internet).

If that proves to be a problem for a number of members, the editor will consider using a different format.

FOR THOSE WITHOUT EMAIL:

You need do nothing more if you have already:

a. arranged for someone else to print copies for you

or

b. requested a postal copy.

Please contact the Editor as soon as possible if:

If you have done nothing yet but still wish to be kept informed about everything the club does.

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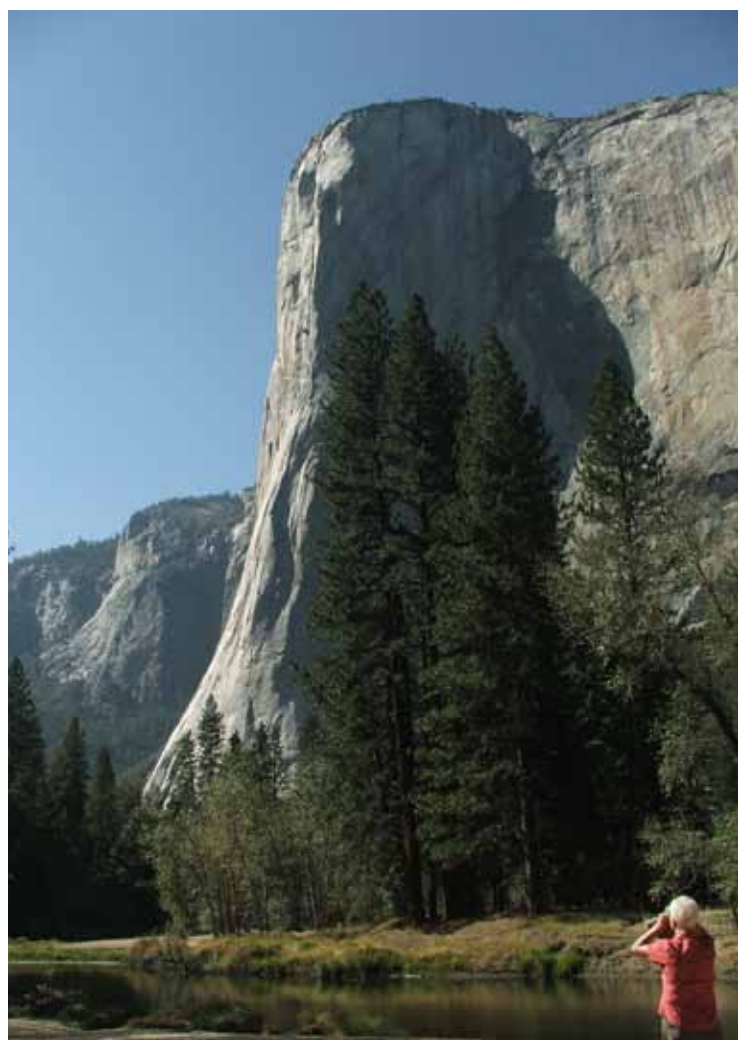
tel: 01539 727531



ANNIVERSARY ADVENTURES

September 1st - 14th. 2015

Colin Hunter



With our 50th Wedding Anniversary looming (am I that old?), Val and I put our heads together to choose a special trip. I suggested cycling in the foothills of the Himalayas, Val more sensibly, preferred Yosemite National Park in California. As it turned out Val's choice won the day, just as well in view of the devastatingly tragic Nepalese earthquake.

The destination decided, we set to, organising flights, hotels, car hire etc. As there were three connecting flights to and from Fresno (the nearest airport to the western entrance to the Park,) these were arranged through Gates Travel to include one night's accommodation at each end of the holiday. The rest of the hotel bookings and car hire were easily organised online. The only hitch we could foresee was the possibility of missing a connection due to flight delay. Our fears on that score turned out to be unfounded. However there were events in store for us which, until resolved, proved a little trying!

The first night on US soil was spent in the Fresno Airport Holiday Inn. Pleasant enough when you're tired enough after an 18 hr flight but somewhat characterless and impersonal. The following morning, however, was greatly enlivened by the discovery that Val's passport was missing! After frantically searching through every item of baggage and clothing to no avail and emailing the various airports in the hope it had turned up in lost property, we made the decision to carry on to the hotel we'd booked in the Park and sort it out as best we could.

A 2 hour scenic drive found us at our base for the next week – a glorified, overpriced motel type establishment on the edge of the Park in El Portal which was OK but had virtually no Wifi or phone connection. No matter, we were told that Yosemite Village, a ¼ hr drive into the Park and where most of the walks started, was connected to Wifi, so that was our daily itinerary – drive to Village, have breakfast, check emails and plan the day's walk. No information on the passport was forthcoming however, and we started to realise that Val would need an Emergency Passport which, we were advised, was obtainable by appointment at the British Consulate in San Francisco, so we decided to spend our second week there, of which more later.

On with the holiday!

The Yosemite Valley is jawdroppingly, stunningly spectacular – impossible to truly capture on camera. Entering the Valley through an ancient forest of sky scraping pines you are confronted by one of the largest unbroken granite monoliths in the world – El Capitan (*middle and bottom left*). This 3000ft sheer wall was first climbed in 1958 by three American climbers over 47 days using, by today's standards, fairly rudimentary equipment. First climbed solo 10 yrs later it now contains many routes and is also popular with base jumpers (a sport which involves throwing yourself off the summit and, after a couple of thousand feet of freefall, opening a parachute and hoping you packed it correctly!).

No such fun for us on the first day, we chose to walk to the Ahwahnee Hotel, the oldest and most prestigious in the Valley, on the way watching huge dragonflies on the river and spotting two birds not seen in Britain – the blue, crested, Stellar Jay and the Yelloweye with its glossy black plumage showing hints of shot silk. Walking back to the car after a monster, US style icecream, we detoured to the foot

of El Cap so that I could lay hands on it and pretend. Later, after returning to the hotel, we went for an All American experience – dinner in a diner. Just like the movies there was loud country music, a busty blonde playing pool and cowboy hats. Great fun, but if you ever go there just don't have the burger and chips – yuck! Still, a bottle of red wine soon takes the taste away.

The second day dawned pretty much the same as all the following days, sunny and very warm and after breakfast in the Village and checking emails we embarked on the walk to Mirror Lake. The trail follows Tenaya Creek and takes in stupendous views of the 8850ft Half Dome rising almost 4500ft above the valley floor (*top right*). Well known as a serious rock climbing venue with over a dozen routes on its sheer, north west face, Half Dome also attracts thousands of walkers – as many as 1000 a day following the approx. 8½ mile hike to the summit, which for the last 400 feet entails the use of two steel cables as handrails and requires a permit obtainable from the National Park Service.

We decided to forgo the pleasure of hiking 17 miles in the heat with another 998 poor souls and continued to Mirror Lake – a misnomer as it is the last remnant of a large glacial lake that is now a seasonal small tarn close to disappearing due to sediment accumulation. In fact when we were there it was completely dry, although still a beautiful spot.

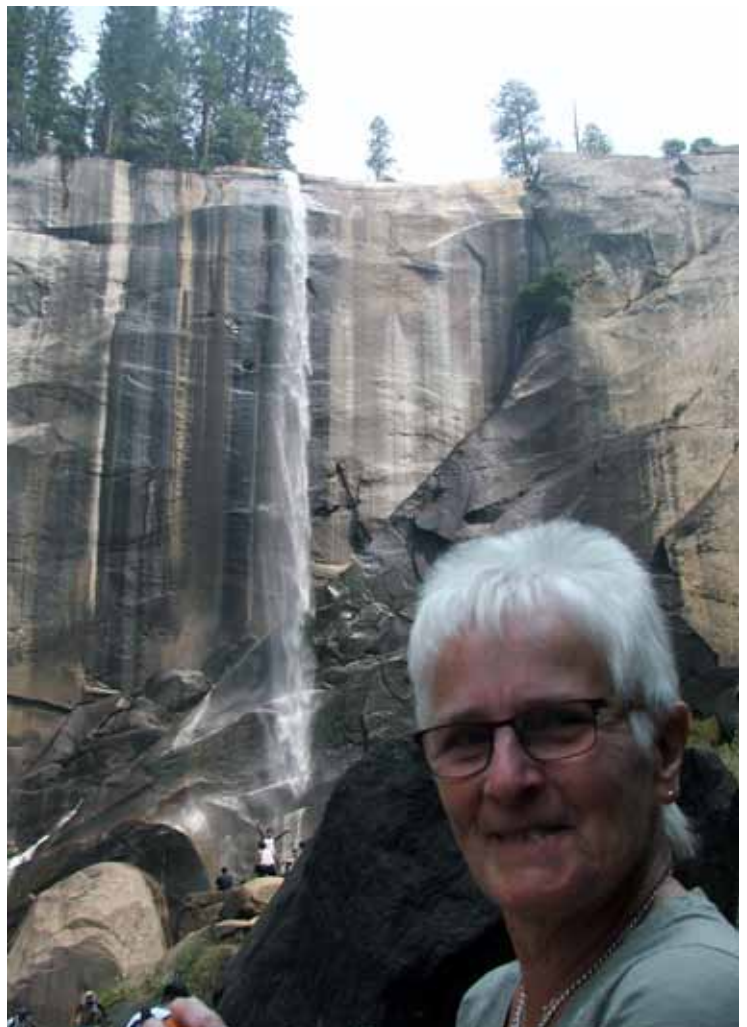
Returning to the hotel for a shower and change of clothes we then drove back up to the Village and the plush, historical (well for the USA) 5 star Ahwahnee Hotel for the 'Anniversary Meal', and very good it was too.

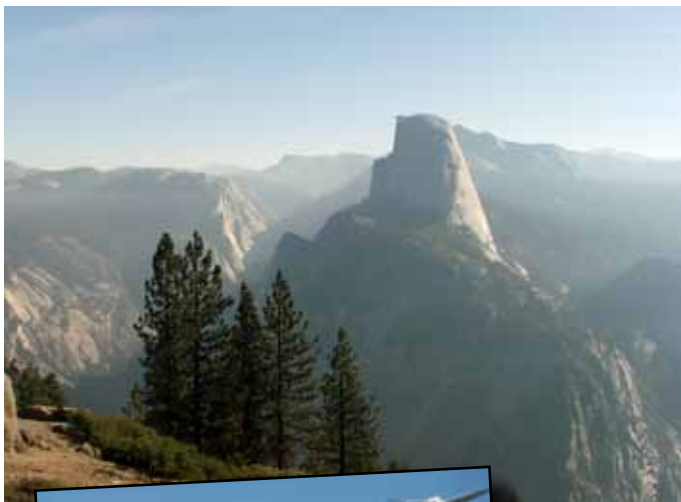
The following day, part of the Valley Loop walk was planned and after driving into the Valley then returning to the hotel to pick up forgotten trainers we finally set out to enjoy the forest with its many different species of pines and broad leafed trees. After it's granite cliffs and spectacular waterfalls, Yosemite is best known for it's giant sequoia trees which can grow, over a period of seven to eight hundred years, to a height 150 ft, the bark being cinnamon in colour and very fire resistant. We also came across bristlecone pines, a species reputed to be the oldest living things on earth.

This walk, although a signed trail, proved to be one of the most peaceful, seeing only 3 or 4 other hikers in a 6 mile round trip. It should have been an 8 or 9 miler but as we crossed a road and asked directions from an American family we were offered a lift back to the car, an offer it would have been churlish to refuse! This, in fact, was one of many instances of help and advice we were given during our stay.

Yosemite being famous for waterfalls we felt we ought to see one, so Sunday morning we were up early because this was Labor Day Weekend, and Vernal Fall was the only one with any water, as California has been suffering from a four year drought. Unfortunately there was no drought of day trippers as we joined hundreds of them on the hot, steep Mist Trail to the base of the fall (*bottom right*). Most of our fellow walkers seemed to be either Mexican or Oriental – perhaps they'd never seen water before. However although Vernal Fall was only a trickle of its normal self we still enjoyed what turned out to be a bizarre multicultural experience.

Later over a beer in the Valley and, having been advised previously to make an appointment with the British Consulate in San Francisco to arrange an emergency passport, we made the decision to leave Yosemite the following day and drive to the West Coast, fortunately only about 3 hours away.





We couldn't leave on Monday morning however, without detouring 35 miles to visit Glacier Point. The Point, standing at 7200ft, is justly famous for being the best view of Yosemite Valley and particularly Half Dome and is a must on any itinerary. We really ought to have walked up the 4½ miles out of the Valley but sadly we had no time left. Fortunately the road is very scenic and enjoyable in itself.

The viewpoint being only 200m from the carpark can be very overcrowded but we had arrived early enough to have beaten almost everyone and in common with the few people there we were stunned by the view even though, because of the massive wildfires raging to the north, there was a slight, smokey mistiness to the air which only added to its otherworldliness (*top left*).

Leaving was a wrench as we had intended staying in the Sierra Nevada area for the whole two weeks, but leave we must and so after driving down the mountain and back to Fresno we took one night in a hotel and exchanged our tiny car for a larger one with a satnav. However paying the hotel bill provided us with more unwanted entertainment – the bank had stopped our credit card because we had stupidly forgotten to inform them of our trip. To compound the problem Vodafone pay as you go does not seem to connect in the US! Fortunately the receptionist was another Good Samaritan and loaned us his phone to contact Santander and sort out the problem. (I'm really beginning to think we need carers with us on holiday!).



So, San Francisco here we come (without flowers in our hair!).

After making an appointment online with the British Consulate, a leisurely start found us trucking across western California to our next destination. The landscape was endlessly flat, arid prairie only punctuated by stopping for lunch at a diner and seeing occasional groups of shotgun shacks by the roadside. Evidence of the long running drought was everywhere from burnt brown grass to the huge banners beseeching the government to spend more on water conservation and less on golf courses etc. Eventually the famous San Francisco skyline hove into view and we checked in to our pre-booked hotel in Millbrae, a suburb on the southern edge of the city, about a ¾hr subway ride to the centre.

Following an excellent breakfast the next morning, we took the subway into the city to orientate ourselves and locate the British Consulate prior to our appointment scheduled for Friday. After which we wandered the streets gawping at skyscrapers and American city life in general until we found ourselves at Fishermen's Wharf, the rather Blackpoolish waterfront area, with its view of Alcatraz Island (*above*), and along with the rest of the tourists, watching the seals and pelicans (*inset above*). Although, frankly, some of our fellow holidaymakers were more interesting. Returning, slightly footsore, to the hotel we reflected on how scenic, friendly and easy to walk around on foot the city proved to be.

Thursday was set aside for cycling – no ordinary bikeride though! So after our daily subway commute we tramped again to the waterfront where we rented two clunky bikes intending to ride across the famous Golden Gate Bridge (*third left*) to Sausalito using the excellent coastal cycleway, one of many throughout the city. The girl at the 'Blazing Saddles' rental desk assumed that, along with most of the other punters, we would be biking across the bridge then returning by ferry. She was amazed when we told her we were cycling the 8 miles there and back again and high fived us! Should have told her we were from t'Lake District.

The bridge, opened in 1937 and a mile long was, until 1964 the longest main span suspension bridge in the world and, with its graceful lines and iconic reddish orange colour, is one of the most photogenic.



A windy, crowded twenty minute ride saw us on the opposite shore from where we freewheeled into the pretty town of Sausalito. Picturesque, wealthy and with a thriving artistic community, scenic waterfront and panoramic views across San Francisco Bay, Sausalito has become one of the top tourist draws on the West Coast. Fortunately, when we visited it was fairly quiet and peaceful and after a wander around the shops and an icecream we returned across the bridge on its opposite side, this time with hardly any fellow cyclists as most of them had caught the ferry – wimps!

Back at base and shopping for dinner (last of the big spenders) we were lucky enough to see two humming birds – don't see many of those in t'Lakes.

The next day was "Emergency Passport Day" so we duly turned up at the gleaming glass and steel skyscraper housing the British Consulate at the appointed hour. With remarkable efficiency we were seen on time and within 45 mins Val was issued with the vital document - £95 please! (*inset right*) But at least she could travel home with me now. Leaving the Consulate we made our way to Chinatown (*top right*), entering through the Dragon Gate. This fascinating area covers just over a square mile and is home to the second largest Chinese community outside Asia. Full of interesting oriental architecture (and Orientals) it continues to retain its own customs, language and identity and is a major tourist attraction and, we felt, the closest thing to visiting China without actually going.

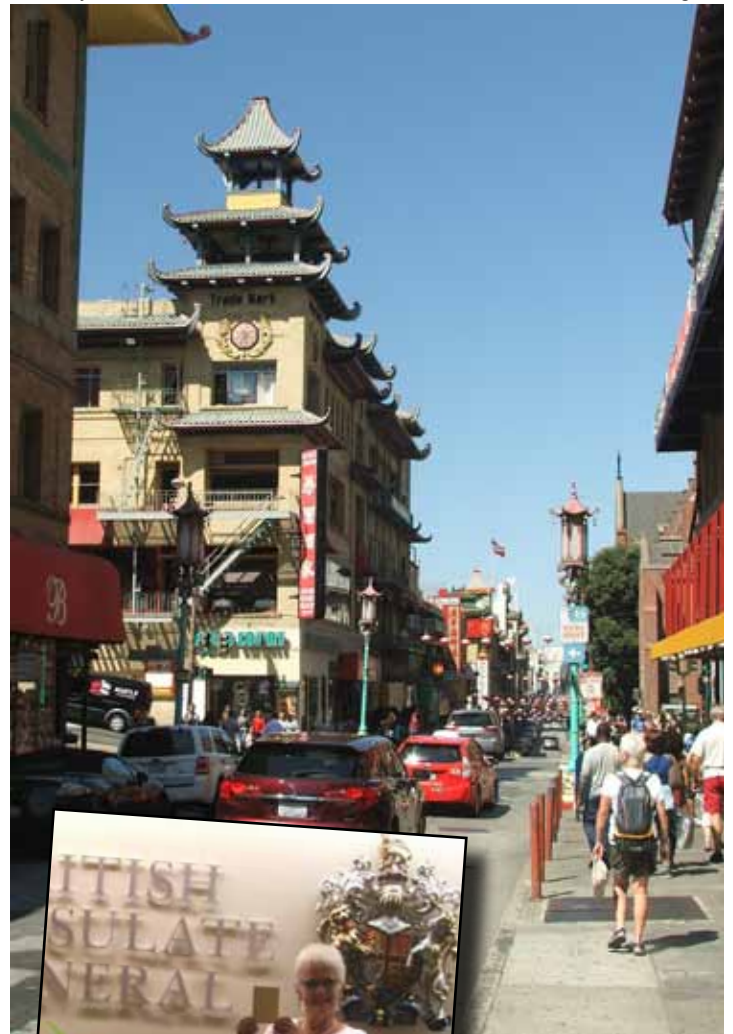
Saturday, for a change, dawned cloudy and cool so the first objective was, for Val's sake, Macy's giant department store (my worst nightmare) followed by a visit to the nearby Yerba Buena Gardens to see the Martin Luther King memorial waterfall – very moving. Wandering again, we walked the seriously steep streets where the famous car chase in Steve McQueen's movie "Bullitt" was filmed – even trying to park on these hills would test many drivers! (*bottom right*). Climbing ever higher through semi-tropical gardens we arrived breathlessly at the 210ft, art deco Coit Tower, a superb viewpoint taking in the city and a huge sweep of the bay.

So, we finally arrived at the last day (hope you've all managed to stay awake!). This was possibly our best San Francisco day as we chose to investigate the huge Golden Gate Park covering approx. 5 sq. miles. A bus ride took us to the entrance, from where we first visited the Conservatory of Flowers, an elaborate Victorian greenhouse designated a Historical Landmark full of lush, beautiful exotic plants.

While in the Conservatory we were told that we had chosen the very day when the San Francisco Opera Co. were performing their annual, free outdoor concert, however before we reached the natural amphitheatre where the concert was to take place we were caught up in more alfresco entertainment. A group of 40 – 50 couples were being taught the Lindy Hop, a dance craze during the 1930s and 40s so we kind of joined in on the end and jived with them – you're never too old!

When we finally arrived at the concert, we were amazed to find a couple of thousand other music lovers already there, some of whom had picnic hampers laid out including canapes and ice buckets of champagne. The next 2½ hours saw us lazily enjoying the final act in our holiday lapping up the sunshine and sublime music. We could'nt think of a better way to wrap up a once in a lifetime holiday. However the holiday gremlins weren't quite finished with us yet. On returning to Fresno and our pre-booked accommodation, prior to flying out, we were told we had no reservation! So out came the credit card again with a refund to be sorted out by Gates Travel on our return.

To sum up our first ever transatlantic holiday, we have to say that despite and sometimes because of the hiccups, we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. The scenery in Yosemite exceeded our expectations, the unplanned stay in San Francisco was delightful and the people we met were unfailingly friendly and helpful. Will we return? *Possibly.*



CHAMONIX 5-19th September 2015

Sarah and Wayne drove to Chamonix in September and were rewarded with some great days out there:

Top left: The exit ridge from the Aiguille du Midi, with Chamonix far below.

Middle left and inset below: camping and walking on the Vallee Blanche with the Grande Jorasses and Dent de Geant behind.

Bottom left: Saving the cablecar fare by flying back down from Plan Praz to Chamonix.

Bottom right: Sarah on the summit of L'Aiguillette d'Argentiere.



SUMMER WINE WEEK AND WORKING WEEKEND

14 - 20th September 2015

There was a much lower turn-out than usual for September's mid-week Summer Wine working party and the following Working Weekend. Still, those who did manage to turn up obviously tackled the work with enthusiasm and were able to leave High House looking immaculate once more.

The annual Risk Assessment was carried out by Sandra Atkinson. It is interesting to note that recommendations (7 of them this time) produced by Assessments nowadays relate to procedures and notices, the way we use the building. In the early days of Risk Assessment they pointed out the many hazards caused by the building itself, problems which have been dealt with. It's reassuring to think that, despite all our thoughts about the excesses of the dreaded 'Health and Safety', we are slowly but surely making High House a safer and a better place to stay.





Brougham Castle

Midweek Walk No. 65
Wednesday 30th September 2015



On a glorious day, more like mid-summer than the end of September, Sue, Tony, Clare and Mick joined Sandra and Tony for their walking history lesson starting at Brougham Castle (*title picture, above*), just south of Penrith.

We followed the River Eamont upstream, across the sheep-cropped pastures of Carltonhall Park, to Eamont Bridge. This has been a strategic river crossing for centuries and we visited just one of the many historic remains there - the circular earthworks known as King Arthur's Round Table (*top left*). Nothing to do with Arthur of course.

From there it was just a short stroll to Brougham Hall. Sandra asked the men en-route if we all liked big knockers. When we'd stopped blushing she showed us the biggest one we've ever seen (*second left and inset*). We had a delightful picnic lunch within the walls of the fortified hall (*third left*), our normal rations being augmented by supplies from the excellent little cafe there.

We explored the neatly maintained grounds of the hall (*bottom left*) and set off across Brougham Park (a grand name for a what is now a ploughed field) to Clifton Hall and its pele tower. Clifton church and its graveyard followed. We looked for the spot where Bonny Prince Charlie's men were buried after the last battle on English soil but later found that we were at the wrong end of the village!

We cut across country from Clifton, following green lanes and field paths, treading warily through a herd of very frisky bullocks, to the deserted little campsite at High Dykes. A long tree-shaded green lane took us back through the fields towards Brougham.

We stood and wondered outside Pembroke House, a huge historic farmhouse that has obviously stood, empty and neglected, for years. It seems odd that such an attractive set of buildings right on the edge of the Lakes has not caught the attention of developers. We shrugged and walked on, past Brocaum Roman Fort and back to our starting point by the river.

Even without the historical details provided by Tony (A) this would have been a fine walk in a pleasant sunny landscape. With them, it became a fascinating exploration. We visited several places which will be well worth returning to. Thank you Sandra and Tony.

There should have been a report here on the 'Fungus Foray' led by Helen Speed on Sunday October 4th. Because of the flooding in Kendal in early December, however, it has not been possible to include the report. All the editor can tell you is that the walk was very successful and that the species found included a truffle!

Coniston Water and Torver Back Common

Midweek Walk No. 66

Wednesday 21st October 2015

There was a late change, the planned leader being forced (temporarily) to 'take it easy', The Editor stepped in with a route devised from a quick look at the map. A reconnaissance was carried out the week before in glorious weather and it seemed ok.

Then the sunny autumn weather ended with a forecast of heavy rain for Wednesday. It improved a little as the day approached but there seemed no doubt that we were in for a soaking.

Seven people thought it worth the risk: Margaret and Roger, Val and Colin, Clare and Mick and frequent guest Norman Bell.

The leader started the day awkwardly by omitting to tell everyone who might come along to turn up early for coffee. It was some time before we were sorted out, all topped up with caffeine and agreeing that midweek walks in future should include time for a pre-start coffee whenever possible.

There was plenty of time though, and as we began the walk the big black clouds that filled the sky, trailing skirts of falling rain, seemed to pass right and left but never over us. From the village centre we walked down the lake road and across the fields to the Coniston Hall campsite. A good path (signed as a cycle-way) runs along the shore, and we made good pace, stopping often to watch the changing weather over the lake (*top and second right*).

The mossy woods gave way to bracken, half-way between green and gold, as we emerged onto the lower slope of Torver Back Common. A cyclist appeared, sweating and cursing, with his bike on his shoulder. Somewhere along the way the good cycle-track had become an undulating, narrow and rocky path, impossible for wheels. We told him he had least another mile before he reached tarmac and left him to his self-imposed torture. We climbed the grassy slopes over the common to an unfamiliar and disorientating view of the Furness fells. Once we'd sorted out the hills we dropped down to the delightful little pool of Kelly Hall Tarn for a picnic lunch (*third and bottom right*).

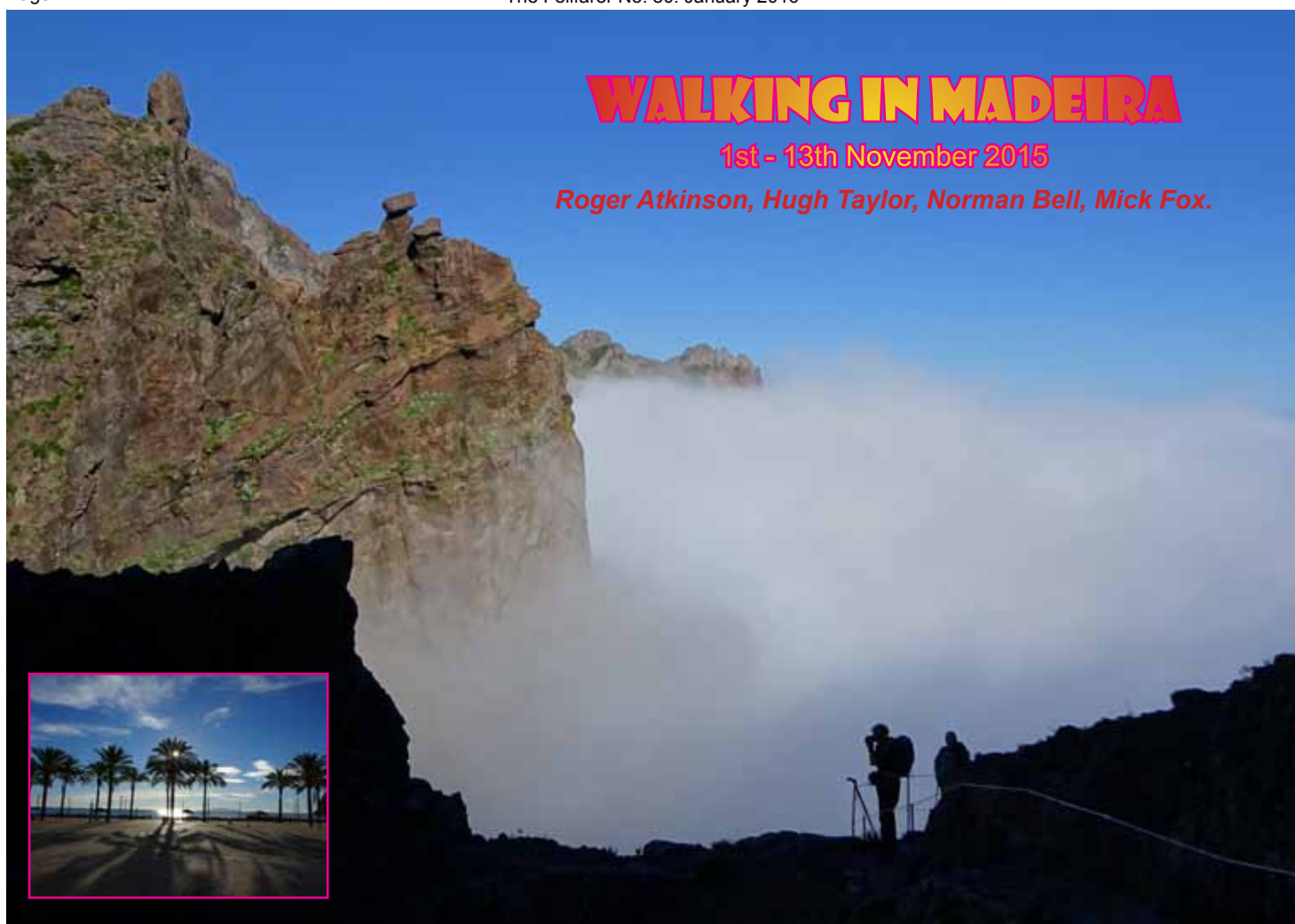
We turned for home: across the common past Long Moss tarn to the High Stile road, to Hoathwaite Farm and onto the disused railway track. No-one wanted to play choo-choo trains so we walked very sedately along the fine footway (interrupted only by the road at Park Gate) for two miles back into the heart of Coniston. As we approached the village the local deity welcomed us with a splendid show of sunlight on Mouldry Bank (*below*). We celebrated the completion of our little walk with pots of tea at a table outside the Meadowdore Cafe. The weather was too good for us to go inside.



WALKING IN MADEIRA

1st - 13th November 2015

Roger Atkinson, Hugh Taylor, Norman Bell, Mick Fox.



After the successful trips to Morocco's High Atlas, the volcanoes of Sicily and last year's Sahara crossing, we cast about for another eye-catching trip. We picked Madeira, beloved by many Brits of a certain age as a winter resort and famous for sunshine, fortified wine and cake. Madeira?

The island is casting off its staid image, however, and now advertises itself as a great walking venue. The title picture above gives a clue as to why (*that's Hughie in silhouette*). We booked a week with KE Adventure and followed our usual plan of staying on for a few days afterwards to make our own adventures.

We touched down at Funchal airport and travelled by taxi to the village of Machico to meet the rest of the KE party. They seemed full of fun (and proved to be just that during the following week) and we were soon trying to remember everyone's names. The following morning (*inset above*) showed us why the island is a favourite holiday destination for many. We were driven up into the mountains to a village at about 3,000 feet above sea level.

To put heights and distances into context: Madeira is about 30 miles long and 13 miles wide. You could probably squeeze 3 Madeiras into the Lake District but the island's mountains rise to over 6,000 feet so there the comparison ends.

We walked steeply upwards, much of the path made of cobbled steps ("bullock steps") graded and shaped to allow animals to be led into otherwise inaccessible places (*middle left*). It soon became clear that, except on the path, these places were inaccessible to humans too. That first day we climbed onto a shoulder of Pico Grande (5,426 ft.) through seemingly impossible vertical rock and descended through dripping cloud-forest (complete with enveloping cloud) to a wet rendezvous with our buses and celebration beers.

The following days established a sort of routine: a different hotel each night, a full days walking with lots of steep uphill and downhill each day (*bottom left*). We only needed to be waterproofed when passing under waterfalls and we generally walked in t-shirt and shorts. The mountains and seacliffs were always full of drama: lots of exposure, little or no protection on narrow paths, tunnels cut into cliffs. All in warm sunshine until the afternoon when Atlantic air creates shallow layers of cloud



against the mountainsides. Sometimes we walked above the cloud and sometimes below it. Sometimes we walked through heather 20 feet high. On day three disaster struck when, on the simplest walking on a wide grassy ridge, something gave in Roger's leg. He battled on in pain to the end of the day (including the most ferocious descent of the week) but had to rule himself out of walking for the rest of the week.

Many of Madeira's walks follow particular man-made features: levadas. These are narrow channels which carry water from the mountains to farms and villages below. Like the paths, they cover mind-boggling terrain and are sometimes carved into cliffs or tunnelled through the rock. Day five's walk was a classic levada walk, the Levada do Caldeirao Verde, which culminated in a visit to a fine slender waterfall falling 300 feet into a large pool.

Day six was the island's classic walk: we were driven to a roadhead at just over 5,000 feet and followed a good path to the island's highest point, Pico Ruivo. After coffee at the refuge just below the summit, the fun started. A good path has been cut into the rock (*top left*) for over 3 miles around the 2nd highest summit to arrive at the 3rd highest summit. It cuts through buttresses in tunnels (*top right*) and passes through the most stupendous scenery (*second right: the path emerges from that tiny tunnel mouth in the middle of the picture and crosses horizontally rightwards*). It weaves through rock architecture that left us gawping open-mouthed. The clouds came in as expected and for a while we fumbled along in murk. Handrails provided only the illusion of safety (*top right again*) and some had been squashed or swept away in rockfalls. Partridges sat on ledges and watched us pass. In the sunshine above the cloud again (*title picture opposite*), we were all terrified by the roar of a huge rockfall just below us but hidden in the mist. We later saw it had swept away a path entirely. So it was a happy crowd (*third right, minus Hughie and Roger*) which gathered, hearts still pounding a little, at Pico do Areeiro, still 5,965 feet above sea level, to catch our buses down. It was the end of the KE week and a new adventure was about to start for our band of four: more levadas (*bottom right*), more soaring seacliffs and even just a little bit of gentle holidaymaking (*below*).

Then we came home to the rain.



ARMISTICE

Remembrance Day at High House

6 - 8th November 2015



Joan's photos tell it all: A dark and wet weekend for the Armistice Meet at High House:

Cagoules and umbrellas for the Remembrance Sunday service at Castle Crag. Water cascading in multiple becks down through the Wad mines and the Runner overtopping the little bridge to the firepit.

Ah, don't you just love November?

Well actually, yes. That same week Tina and Kevin Ford were enjoying perfect weather in the Cairngorms. The bottom two photos show them having a fine day out on Ben Macdhui



BUTTER CRAGS TARN & BEYOND

MIDWEEK WALK NO 67

Wednesday 26th November 2015



Nine Felfarers boarded the 555 at different points on the route and 'alighted' (the driver kept using the term - we wondered what our foreign visitors made of it) at Grasmere village centre. Four more waited in Broadgate carpark, muttering darkly about the extraordinary cost of £16 for parking two cars.

And so we were: *Irene and Graham, Sue and Tony, Val and Colin, Jan (all the way from Cheshire), Frank, Hugh, Norman, Sam, Clare and Mick*. The forecasters had promised us a dry day but the temperature had dropped to wintry levels and a northerly breeze pushed cloud shadows and bright sunlight across the fellsides.

The Ramsbottoms led us across the main road to a novel start through a building site to a 'secret' path behind the big walled garden there. The path climbed easily above the village (*top left*) and eventually joined the main path to Alcock Tarn (*cover photo*).

Alcock Tarn was originally known as Butter Craggs Tarn and was enlarged and dammed in the nineteenth century by the owner, a Mr Alcock of Grasmere, who then stocked it with brown trout.

We paused for coffee at the tiny nameless pool (*see the website gallery for photos of the great reflections there*) partway up the track and then for lunch at the tarn, where a wall gave shelter from the breeze (*second left*). We had fine views southwards and to the Langdale Pikes (*third left*). A quick vote on whether to descend or continue to Nab Scar gave a unanimous result: it was too early to think of descending.

The vague path from the back of the tarn climbs gently and it was a real surprise to arrive at the summit of Nab Scar so quickly and so easily. We posed for photographs (*bottom left*) with the grand view across Loughrigg to Windermere and the Southern Fells behind us before dropping down the steep descent path to Rydal.

An attempt to decide which cafe to visit (Rydal or Grasmere) was a shambles, with abstentions, double voting and all kinds of confusing tactics. We stood there like lost sheep until Colin decided that a benign dictatorship works better than a democracy and headed off along the Corpse Road at a determined rate. We followed.

We found one of those odd things that are beginning to litter the countryside: a money-tree (*below*) and spent some time prising coins from the decaying timber. With pockets jingling** we resumed our high-level stroll back to Grasmere.

We rounded off the day (nearly) with a jolly hour of tea and cakes at the Grasmere Tea Gardens. Nearly? Well, there was some sort of miscalculation and we actually rounded off the day with a rather less jolly hour in the bus shelter waiting for the 555 back to Kendal. Never mind, the banter didn't dry up and we were all still smiling when the bus finally did arrive. It didn't matter anyway; we'd had a great little walk, much of it on paths that were new to many of us. Thank you Irene and Graham.

***just kidding; I'm sure we put them all back.*





*Happy, then Miserable,
then Happy again!
Midweek Walk No. 68
Wednesday 2nd December 2015*

The forecast was not encouraging: heavy rain all day. Still, the leader had promised a *short* walk sandwiched between morning coffee at Wilf's and lunch at the Eagle and Child so we knew the misery would not be prolonged. Fourteen of us chatted and joked over coffee for an hour, no-one in a hurry to get out into the wet. When we finally did rouse ourselves we found that the rain had stopped and we could pose comfortably for a team photo before setting off through the streets of Staveley (*above, left to right: Roger, Ruth, Clare, Margaret, Mick, Irene, Graham, Val, Norman, Elaine, Sam, Frank, Colin, with Hugh behind the camera*). A reconnaissance trip on the day before had shown that part of the planned route across fields was lying under water and so we followed a shorter version, at just over 3 miles perhaps the shortest KFF organised walk ever!

We crossed the bypass on the Crook road and turned right at the Ashes Lane crossroads to New Hall farm. We left the tarmac there and splashed along a track through waterlogged pastureland and up the little ascent to the top of Lily Fell, all of 592 feet above sea level (*middle right*). It's a superb little viewpoint (especially on a warm sunny day) but within a minute of our arrival we were being battered by a gale-force wind that seemed to spring from nowhere. No-one wanted to linger. We hurried back the way we came as the rain began again. It was not the downpour we had been expecting but we'd have preferred it to wait another half an hour or so. We followed the Dales Way route past despondent-looking ponies in their paddock down to the Crook Road and then via track and field back to the Staveley main road.

The Eagle and Child had a welcoming log fire burning in their upstairs room and had reserved tables for us. It was a jolly atmosphere now we were drying out, made more jolly by the arrival of Gordon, John, Fred, Jean, Sarah-Jane, Dorothy, Sue and Tony (*bottom right*). The pub did us proud, serving our 22 cooked lunches simultaneously and we all agreed that £5 for their special menu was great value.

So it had been a good sociable day. Most of it had been spent indoors but, having been to the top of Lily Fell, we could justifiably claim that we had lived up to our name of 'FellFarers'.



SOCIAL SUB-COMMITTEE NEWS

Well a much quieter year has just flown by! It would have been very hard to compete with our 80th year celebrations but we still had some brilliant away meets to Scotland, Gran Paradiso and locally to Conistown and Wasdale. I think we all made the most of the year in spite of the rather indifferent summer but a glorious Autumn made up for it.

Well as we are coming to the end of the year we are also coming to the end of the Fellfarer as we know and love it. Don't worry we will still keep you informed of the social calendar and your year planner is included in this edition. We will keep in touch by email and for those of you without email your news will be sent by post or via a willing friend with email. Do keep in touch and let us know if there are any problems with this.

Later on in the coming year it would be good to do some of the winning Fellfarers' Way walks and it is hoped they will be included in the social programme.

Please note the AGM will not be at the Duke of Cumberland pub, Kendal, as it suffered flood damage and will be closed for the foreseeable future. You will see we have managed to book a room in the Kendal Rugby Club instead.

Does anyone want to have another céilidh this year? Please get in touch if you do. We have had a few names but not enough yet to warrant staging another one.

Finally a big thank you to Joan, who is leaving the sub-committee, for all her work on your behalf.

All that remains is to hope you all had a happy and peaceful Christmas and all the very best for 2016.

With best wishes from the social sub-committee
Clare, Mike, Joan and Laura

Bunkhouse Away Meet

15th to 17th April 2016

Dan-y-Mynyth Hut,
Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Festiniog,
Snowdonia.

Cost: £9 per night
(to be confirmed)

This hut is an old miners cottage and can accommodate 11 people in 2 bedrooms. This is a great base for anyone interested in industrial archaeology, hill-walking or climbing. If members want a longer break the bunkhouse may be available to book either side of the weekend.



For more details and to book a bed please contact
Mark Walsh on 01606 891050.

South Lakes Walk and Meal Sunday 10th April 2016 The Dunnerdale Fells.

This lower level mountain walk was cancelled last November because of poor weather. Let's try again:

Meet at the Dunnerdale Fells' Reading Rooms car park, Broughton Mills (GR 222 906) at 11 am. That's about 50 metres north of The Blacksmiths Arms.

The walk will be about 12 km, with 650m of ascent, and will take approximately 6 hours. After the walk we can adjourn to the pub for a bar meal and/or drink. Fingers crossed for good weather as magnificent views have been promised!

PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

for the 'Review of the Year'



The 'Review' slideshow is imminent. If you haven't got round to sending your photos to the Ed. yet, do it now!

Photographic Competition to be held after the AGM

Friday 29th January 2016

There will be prizes given for the best entries in each category:

1. Fellfarers' 2015 events
2. Humorous
3. Favourite 2015 holiday photo
4. Open

Please either give your prints, size A5 or 6ins x 8ins, to a member of the sub-committee prior to the AGM, or bring them along on the night.

All photos must have been taken in the last 12 months. Please write your name on the back of each photo and say whether you want it returned.

JUDGING WILL BE BY MEMBERS PRESENT



The KFF Scottish Hotel Meet

Oban, March 2016

The venue for 2016 is The Royal Hotel in Oban, booked from 20th March for 5 nights. The hotel stands in the heart of Oban, near to the harbour and local amenities. It is an ideal place to stay to explore the Isle of Seil, and the surrounding area. Ben Cruachan is just one of the many mountains in the area and of course Fort William and Glen Coe are only just up the road.

The price is £34 per night per person for dinner bed and breakfast.

If you would like to come along please get in touch with Clare

Continental Camping Meet June 2016

Who's interested in our next European camping meet in June? In recent years we have had successful camping meets in the Ecrin, Pyrenees, Dolomites, Vercors, and Gran Paradiso. Where next?

A meeting will be arranged in February to plan where and when.

If you are interested please let Clare Fox know asap.

KFF CLUB EVENTS January - April 2016

Where the contact person's phone number is not given below, full contact details should be found on page 2.

Events marked with an *asterisk are described in more detail on page 19.

Dates given for multi-day events are from day of arrival to day of departure.

January

Weekend 1st - 4th

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 5th. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)

High House is booked for Fellfarers (continued from Christmas 2015)

Weekend 8th - 10th

Glencoe Winter Meet - Clachaig chalets. Booking essential. Info: Hugh Taylor

Saturday 9th

Charlie's Walk. Kendal to Cunswick Scar via Serpentine Woods, followed by lunch at The Union Jack. Meet 10.30 am. Outside The Rifleman's Arms. Leader Val Calder

Wednesday 21st

Midweek Walk - The Quarries of Tilberthwaite. 5 miles, including lunch at the Three Shires pub. Meet 10.45. Low Tilberthwaite carpark (GR 306 010) Leader Hugh Taylor

Weekend 22nd -24th

Winter Quiet Weekend at High House.

Saturday's walk will be planned over a bar meal on Friday night at the Scafell Hotel. Bring your ideas along.

Tuesday 26th

***Slide Show** - 'Review of the Fellfarers' Year 2015'. See page 19.

Meet 7.30pm. Strickland Arms. Sandwiches provided. Guests welcome.

Friday 29th

***Annual General Meeting and Photographic Competition**

Meet 7.30pm. Kendal Rugby Club, Shap Road, Kendal. Sandwiches provided

Every Thursday evening Climbing for All. Kendal Climbing Wall. Info: Mike Palk (01524 736548)

February

Tuesday 9th

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 2nd. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)

Slide Show - 'Ice Fire and Fun' Irene and Graham Ramsbottom

Meet 7.30pm. Strickland Arms. Sandwiches provided. Guests welcome.

Week 12th - 18th

High House is booked for the Fellfarers. Half Term.

Saturday 20th

'The Appetite Enhancer' Walk. Farleton Knott from the new Auction Mart. Approx. 3 hours.

Meet 10.45. Auction Mart car park. (GR 536 822) Leader Krysia Niepokojczycka (01539 60523)

Saturday 20th

Annual Dinner at Eagle and Child, Staveley

Wednesday 24th

Midweek Walk - Latterbarrow from Far Sawrey. 8 miles. Easy. Path and forest track.

Meet 10.30 am at GR 379 954. Leaders Sue and Tony Maguire K.232597

Week from 29th...

High House is booked for The Summer Wine Team.

Every Thursday evening Climbing for All. Kendal Climbing Wall. Info: Mike Palk (01524 736548)

March

...Week until 4th

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 1st. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)

High House is booked for The Summer Wine Team

Weekend 4th - 6th

High House Working Weekend

Tuesday 15th

Slide Show - 'Around the World in 80 Days (ish)' Gary and Maggie Lightfoot.

Meet 7.30 pm at Strickland Arms. Sandwiches provided. Guests welcome.

Week 20th - 25th

***The Scottish Hotel Meet** - Oban

Wednesday 25rd

Scottish Midweek Walk to be planned in Oban

Weekend 25th -29th

High House is booked for Fellfarers. Easter Bank Holiday.

Every Thursday evening Climbing for All. Kendal Climbing Wall. Info: Mike Palk (01524 736548)

April

Sunday 10th

(Committee meet at the Rifleman's Arms on Tuesday 12th. Social Evening 9 pm onwards)

***Weekend Walk/M meal.** The Dunnerdale Fells. Approx 12 km. See page 19.

Meet 11 am. Reading Rooms car park Broughton Mills (GR222 906) Leader Kevin Ford K.734293

Weekend 15th-17th

Bunkhouse Away Meet - Blaenau Festiniog, Snowdonia. £9 per night (to be confirmed).

Longer break may be available. See page 19. Leader Mark Walsh (01606 891050)

Thursday 21st

First Evening Walk - A Woodland Wander through Hynning Woods and Warton Crag. 4.5 miles.

Meet 6.30pm. Warton Car Park (GR 492 724). Leader Kath Palk (01524 736548)

Thursday 21st

First Climbing For All evening at Warton Upper Crag (GR SD 494728)

All walkers and climbers to meet up afterwards at a nearby pub. Info: Mike Palk (01524 736548)

Wednesday 27th

Midweek walk. From Hardendale. 5 to 6 miles.

Meet at 10.30 am (GR 580 143). Leaders Colin and Val Hunter (01539 730177)

Weekend from 29th...

High House is booked for Fellfarers

Every Thursday evening Climbing for All. A local crag from the 21st. Info: Mike Palk (01524 736548)