

FELLFARER APRIL 2009



ED.

I seem to remember writing in the last editorial about struggling a bit on the last issue. I apologise for that. I feel much better now, thank you. This issue has been much easier and I hope you all enjoy it.

It's been a great start to the Anniversary Year in many ways, although we've lost some of our most valuable (older) members recently and it's a shame that they won't be with us to share the celebrations, particularly when so much of our recent work has been gathering together, with their help, the history of the building and the club. We have many wonderful photographs contributed generously by members whose collections go back to the 1940s

We should, as the year progresses, remember, not only those who conceived the idea of the club and the hostel, but also the 'ordinary' members who embraced the spirit of adventure that was central to the early club. I, for one, feel proud to be associated with them all.

PS. You'll see, on page 3, that John Peat was our President for 34 years. It occurs to me that, as one of the oldest clubs of our type in the UK, or even the world, there is a possibility that John is eligible for an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

Anybody fancy doing some research?

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75th Anniversary Clothes



We have a range of great clothes, with the Club's embroidered 75th Anniversary logo on, for you to order. An order form for some basic items is included with this newsletter or can be downloaded from the club's website.

If you want something else, take a look at the catalogue - there's a huge range of clothing - online at www.corporate-embroidery.co.uk and just give us your request.

We will price and order the item for you.

We will collect orders (to save postage!) and deliver
them at a mutually convenient time.

Please send your order forms to Bill Hogarth
Or call him if you want more information

Your invitation to the Fellfarers 75th Birthday Party

Back Page:

Ed giving it all he's got



Yippee!

We are having a party at High House to celebrate the Club's 75th Anniversary on Saturday 2nd May 2009!

The party will start at 1 pm and carry on into the evening until the Vimto runs out. There will be food, drink, chat, songs, jokes and great company.

Bring an instrument—but only if you can play it!

We do hope you can come.

R.S.V.P.

If you are coming please let Krysia Niepokojczycka (tel 015395 60523) know how many a.s.a.p..

This is necessary for catering purposes.

If you wish to stay at High House on that weekend your bed must be booked in advance.

Please contact Peter Goff (tel 01524 736990) to book your bed,

CILVIB NIEWS

- We were all shocked and saddened by the sudden passing of Audrey Ferguson on New Year's Day. Audrey and
 Myers have been lifelong supporters of the club and were an inseparable couple. We'll miss Audrey very much. A
 tribute appears on page 15.
- We had more sad news just before going to print: **Marion Duff**, another member who, with her late husband Alec, was a stalwart of the club since at least the 1950s, passed away on March 8th. More about Marion in the next issue.
- The Membership Subscription will go up to £20 next year.
- A new Constitution was adopted at the AGM and some amendments to the High House Policy were agreed. Both documents are available on the club website. The Policy rule changes are also listed on page 12. Please take time to read them and note, in particular, the increase in guest night fees. AGM minutes are available from the Secretary.
- John Peat, our longest-serving **President**, has now retired after 34 years in office and Gordon Pitt, our *first democratically elected* President, is now in post. A big thank-you to John and a big welcome to Gordon. See page 12.
- Congratulations to Ted Niepokojczycki. He celebrated his 80th birthday on 4th March 2009.
- Note that the Birthday Party at High House on 2nd May is expected to be a busy event (see opposite page). If you wish to stay overnight at High House (sorry, members only) during YOU MUST BOOK A PLACE by calling Peter Goff. Peter expects the beds to be taken very quickly so you should contact him as soon as possible. Note also that if you are just coming along for the day and want to enjoy the buffet YOU MUST ALSO BOOK IN ADVANCE by calling Krysia Niepokojczycka. We need to know how many we are catering for. Please don't just turn up unannounced.
- A little while ago, someone left three of Wainwright's Pictorial Guides to the Lakeland Fells on a window sill in the Men's Dormitory. They appear to be brand new. We thought it likely that they were left by a member of a visiting club but no-one has yet come forward to claim them. Do they belong to a Fellfarer? If they are yours, contact the editor and tell him which guides they are and they will be returned to you. If they are not claimed in the next month or so they will be added to the High House Library.
- Members have always been able to make exclusive bookings of High House in the same way that other clubs do. Now it has been agreed that members can do so, mid-week, at a <u>discounted rate</u>. The deal is available for the nights of Monday to Thursday and the current rate is half-price - £60 per night.
- The editor apologises for **two mistakes** in the **Social Calendar** in the last issue. No **1**: The grid reference for meeting on the 7th of March was wrong: the eastings and northings were transposed. The Ed apologises to all those people who turned up on a little hill to the east of Slaidburn, Bowland Forest, and wondered where the rest of us were. No **2**: The club walk advertised for March 27th was on Saturday March 28th of course.
- February's Ceilidh was a sell-out success and many people there asked if it
 could be repeated next year. The Committee is considering the possibility. Let
 them know if you think it should become a regular event. The event raised almost £200. This will be used to help towards paying for other social events
 during the year. Pictures on page 17.
- The committee was dismayed to hear that some members have taken their own electric heaters to High House and that on at least one occasion one had been left on, unguarded, upstairs all day. This is both dangerous and wasteful. Please leave your heaters at home. The upstairs rooms can get very cold but members are asked to bring appropriate clothing and sleeping bags during winter months.
- The club is enjoying a period of growth, with applications for membership arriving at almost every committee meeting. Membership stands at about 140 at the moment. Do you think there should be a limit on numbers? Let a committee member know if you have any thoughts on the matter.

So where's this then?

Yes, it's Lakeland.

Yes, it's been tinkered with on the computer.

Yes, it will look really boring when shown as it really is.

Never mind that; let your mind wander up and down those wonderful declivities for a while and then work out which fells they are, and where the picture was taken from. *Answer on page 13.*



A Winter Walk in Borrowdale

13th December 2008

Mark Walsh



At 10.00 am on Saturday the 13th December eleven Fellfarers gathered in a lay by on the A6 just south of High Barrow Bridge. It was wet and cold and looking up, the tops could not be seen for mist, but fully clad in wet weather gear we were about to go on a Winter Walk in Borrowdale (the Westmorland one) along the Whinfell Ridge arranged by John and Caroline Walsh.

A little rain and low cloud is not likely to spoil a good walk. So we set off across the road and straight onto the footpath heading for Ashstead Fell. Within minutes we were heading upwards. The path was wet and steep but easy to follow and after a short time we had all climbed to a good height! We stopped briefly to look back towards the cars for signs of any latecomers, but none were to be seen. Although the air was cold we had all warmed up on our climb and a few comments were made regarding the lack of need for that extra layer of clothing which always seems a good idea at the start.

We continued and regrouped at the summit by the cairn. This cairn is fascinating as it looks bigger at the top than at the bottom and seems to lean at a slight angle.

The view at this point could only be described by people who had been in better weather, but I was assured you would normally see for miles.

After a short while we continued and made good progress following the path over to Castle Fell. This stretch was fairly dry under foot with occasional patches of snow left from the previous week. Gradual up hill slopes were followed by shorter but in some cases steeper down hill sections but all easy going. On some of the higher ground the

views began to appear as the mist lifted.

From Castle Fell we descended down through a dense wood which was very boggy, and in places an alternative route other than the path needed to be found. This stretch didn't last long and we were soon heading onto Whinfell and from there onto the track leading up to The Repeater Station. From here the path descended and became less exposed and as soon as trees were seen it was decided to have a short break for lunch, which was welcomed by all.

The path then led us down to the river Borrowbeck. After following the path to the left of the river, we crossed over the bridge and followed the farm road to Lower Borrowdale Farm. This farm brought a lot of debate regarding the plans for a holiday village in the valley. We then moved on following the track past the newly but only partially restored High Borrowdale.

Another bridge took us back over to the left of the river again, and the track followed the Borrowbeck back in the direction of the A6. The views round the valley were stunning as we followed the river back to the road. As we reached the end of the track there was one final uphill push back to meet the road at the point where we had started. Alas this is where I had to leave the party, but I believe in true Fellfarers tradition the group gathered at a pub to discuss the days events, dry off and have a couple of well earned pints.

Thanks to John and Caroline for organizing the walk, and everyone for making it a very enjoyable day.

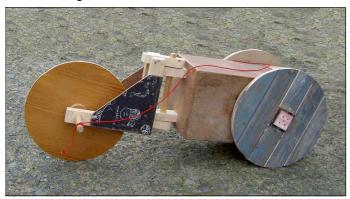
New Year at High House - The ATT Trials

Anatomy of failure - a very personal view - the date's fairly obvious

December saw the nuttier members of the club scouring the skips and the riverbanks for any junk or jetsam that would be useful in the building of an **All Terrain Toboggan**. I left it very late and realised I had only two days left. I spent Sunday night in my cellar looking at what I had: plywood, chipboard, planks, and poles. Could it be done? I laid it all out on the floor and went to bed.

Monday, bright and early, I brought out the tools and sat, mug of tea in hand, wondering where to start. The vehicle had to run downhill on soft or hard ground, it had to be steerable, it had to be robust enough to stand up to the rigours of bouncing down a stony track, it had to be self-propelled, and it had to float with its rider on top of it.

Two days flashed by. I didn't see daylight, but at 7 pm on Tuesday I put in the last screw and sat back to admire the beast. It was never going to win a race but it had been fun in the making.



Wednesday dawned. Race day. A freezing fog filled the streets of Kendal. I was pleased that the thing fitted into the back of the car, out of sight.

We drove out of the inversion at Dunmail Raise and, after two minutes of brilliant sunshine, dropped back into the mirk. People were walking and skating on the frozen surface of Derwentwater. I was thinking, "At least, with the becks frozen solid, there won't be enough water for the Wild Water Race."

Race 1 - The Classic Downhill Race

anyway.

and then to 12 noon. I didn't mind. I didn't want to do it

The six vehicles were hoisted over the wall to the adjacent field and lined up at the top of the slope. I realised with a shock that the slope is convex and so steep that you can't

actually see the course from the start line. Everyone else was crouched or lying only inches above the ground. I sat up, like a camel-rider, far above the rock-hard frozen turf nervous about the inevitable tumble. Too late to back out now.

Mr. Goff, clipboard clutched to his breast, raised an arm. The atmosphere became electric. Amid shouts from the crowd the signal was given: we're off!



Well, actually five of them were off. My Thing just rolled over and lay on its back. I had already discovered that the thing had a basic design flaw - it had a fully-functioning steering mechanism, but the configuration meant that any attempt to steer it while moving *forwards* caused it to jack-knife. It would work perfectly when running backwards but I was not going to run down that or any other hill backwards.

Whoops of delight came from the distant crowds as the competitors crossed, one after another, the first finishing line......

Kevin was the clear winner.

Race 2 - The Time Trial

A short break was allowed for repairs and refreshments before the scariness was cranked up a notch or two. The second course was a time trial, the descent of the High House access road, from bird-table to gate.

Kevin had been the clear winner last year with a time of 26.23 seconds. There were no high expectations of fast times this year because October's seriously bad rainstorms had gouged out the track, leaving pot-holes and a rough bumpy terrain. It made no difference to me; I didn't expect to reach the half-way bridge, never mind the gate.

Starts were in reverse order so I was ordered to take to the starting line first.

- "Where is it?" I asked.
- "What?" said Kevin.
- "The starting line. If this event is timed to fractions of a second, we should all start on exactly the same line, don't you think?"
- "Err, ok, it's that stone there."
- "Front or back of the stone? Front or back wheels?"
- "Front wheels on the back of the stone. Now just get on with it!"
- I prepared myself and on the timekeepers arm being

raised, pushed off. 3 yards down the track the contrary Beast lay down again. Spectators were yelling encouragement (if laughter and jeering counts as encouragement) in my ear so I picked it up and set off again. Against all expectation it set off in a straight line, gathered speed and didn't dump me off again until the halfway bridge.

The process was repeated several times before I hauled the thing over the finishing line and left it in a heap by the dustbins where it belonged.

I could now enjoy watching the other competitors humiliating themselves. Richard had a very good go at it......



.....but everyone else managed the rough descent without having to endure too much mockery.

Kevin, winning again, had even managed to knock almost half a second off his record, despite the poor conditions.

Race 3 - The Road Race

I thought I might do o.k. at this one, trundling along in the manner of someone in a wheelchair, propelling myself by pushing on the wheels. I couldn't even get it to move.

Long after the others had set off, Clare took pity on me and pulled me along the road. She did this so well that we overtook Richard just before the finishing line. Gentleman that he is, he didn't complain to the Man With The Clipboard so I tried to get myself disqualified. It was all in vain. There was no getting out of the next race that way.

It had been very hard work steering as Clare galloped along with me in tow. The jack-knife effect on the steering increased with speed and my legs ached with the effort.

"I'm knackered." I said, sitting there as Clare gasped for breath at the finish.

Carol seemed to find this hilarious. Can't see why.

Anyway, Graham's machine had come into its own on the flat and he had pedalled himself to a clear victory.



Race 4 - The Wild Water Race

"That's it. All finished." I thought, "Not enough water for the last race.

"We'll just go along at look at the dub at the road end." said the Man With The Clipboard, "I think you might be surprised."

Surprised was not the word for it. Lots of words sprang to mind but they involved a lot of swearing. In a world that seemed locked in winters icy grip, Peter Goff had found the only deep running water in Borrowdale.

The dub was inky black, the bottom too deep for the weak sunlight to penetrate the crystal water.

Richard set off first, clutching his ATT to his chest and kicking his way across the pool.

Jason sat astride his and paddled across with only his feet wet.



My turn. The Beast proved its consistency. It rolled over in the water just as it rolled over on land. I couldn't stay on top of it and became the first to achieve total immersion. I was floundering out of my depth, the spectators now strangely quiet. My brand new welly-boots slipped off my feet as I kicked. They sank, never to be seen again.

I survived and made it to the far side, leaving IT floating serenely on its back, a hazard to shipping which Mark managed to avoid as he cruised across the pool.



Kevin balanced precariously on his and avoided a ducking, but did so less elegantly and more noisily than Jason.

Graham's machine just sank. We knew it would.

Jason won the event and Graham won maximum points for Presentation but Kevin's wins in the first two events gave him an unassailable lead and he won the Championship Trophy...which doesn't actually exist yet.

PS. As I shivered back to the car, I opened the field gate and my wet fingers froze to the metal latch.

PPS. Lots more full colour photographs on the website.

After the trials: senses returning to 120 numbed fingers and toes and departing from 6 brains:



New Year's Day - a postscript

The Aussie lad serving behind the bar at the Scafell had been bragging for some time that he intended to swim somewhere in the river on New Year's Day. The alcohol-fuelled response from some Fellfarers had been a promise to do the same.

The previous day's ducking and a Borrowdale turned frosty white overnight (see right), however, put off all but two would-be participants - only Graham and Jason were still 'up for it' in the morning. The two of them considered that the Editor's Lost Boots (see opposite page) was a worthy cause and decided to return to the dub to hunt for them, rather than joining the Lad from Down Under.

It was a valiant attempt in those conditions but it was all in vain - the boots still lurk in the black depths.

Well done Graham and Jason, though.

Bloomin' heroes you are!







JUST A PERFECT DAY

Wrynose Bottom to Three Tarns and beyond.

4th January 2009

D Birkett

There are few occasions in one's walking life that you have a truly memorable day - just a perfect day - a combination of conditions, company and wild scenery. 2009 dawned with high pressure sitting over the British Isles, the North West in particular benefiting from this unusual weather conditions, typified by hard frosts and bright sunlit days. The popularity of the Lake District is increasing over the Christmas and New Year period; no complaints should be heard from the tourism industry but one of a welcome boost to seasonal income.

I had numerous walks out over this settled period in the Shap fells, Ullswater and the nearby Yorkshire Dales, my last visit to the Wrynose area was a diabolical day on Grey Friar and Great Carrs, testing me to the limit. In contrast the day dawned cold, still and a little over-cast with a pessimistic forecast for lowering cloud and drizzle by midday - fortunately the forecasters got it wrong.

The K quartet, comprising of Bill, Roger and Andrew were in good form ready to shed the festive indulgencies. The junior River Duddon and the Roman road were crossed at Gaitscale Close (ON-goats at outlying hut or shieling). We edged up the boundary wall passing the long redundant farm steading. An early National Park (1970) stile crossed the fell wall - a buzzard swirled overhead - the faint path rose steeply over dry grass and frozen ground. We spread out, developing our own differing paces, Andrew shot ahead to investigate a frozen column of ice—Roger and I held a steady pace - Bill brought up the rear. Two public rights of way are found in the vicinity, one a bridleway goes through steep scree and crags and is a prime candidate for diversion or extinguishment. A.W. suggests a route near the line of the bridleway; there is little sign of use on the ground. At Red How the contours eased and the southern ridge of Little Stand, a satellite of Crinkle crags developed, behind us the views opened up with Grey Friars and Gt. Carrs to the fore and Dow Craq behind. The faint track wended through small crags and frozen dubs before gaining height gradually and reaching the summit cairn at 727m. The view was breathtaking with the rocky ramparts of the Scafells, extenuated by deep shadows - one of Lakeland's finest views - to the south Harter Fell, devoid of its afforestation, gave a pyramidical outline with Eskdale and Dunnerdale stretching out as far as the eye could see. The day was a photographers dream and my companions took advantage. I quietly consumed my bait and looked in awe from our privileged position.

We had seen few walkers until we joined the procession at the 'bad step' between the first and second Crinkle - this is indeed a fine outlook with Great Cove plunging into Crinkle Gill on the Langdale side and the more interestingly named but benign Adam-a-Cove on the upper Eskdale aspect. Climbing up to the highest Crinkle(859m) with the extra winter clothing on was hard work, new vistas opened

up towards Bowfell and Great End with Skiddaw in the distance, a raven croaked and swirled above us; the day remained perfect. Up and down, in and out, the rough stony path navigates the remaining Crinkles before descending to Three Tarns - frozen sheets of water glistening in the sunshine. We paused on the west side of the tarns, leaving the procession and entering one of Lakeland's wilderness areas. As is often the case the 'crack' was good with tales of Christmas past and present, walks undertaken and friends no longer with us. I said 'that's halfway and it's 2.15, we had better be going'

The once popular path to Eskdale is grassing over, descending steeply into Green Hole, part of Ling Cove, the normal gathering place for those 'lost' on the Crinkles. The public rights of way in this vicinity must have been drawn by the cartographer on a particularly bad Monday morning, many are in straight lines, through crags and down suicidal slopes - more work for the National Park. Rest Gill was dry as we progressed down the cove passing Churn How before joining the Moasdale bridleway at Swinsty Gill. We paused for photographs of the setting sun over the Scafells and Bowfell Links, the lengthening shadows adding to the captivating scene.

The Moasdale bridleway was covered in ice and we picked our way over the surface as the 'alpenglow' deepened over the valley landscape. A number of Mosedales exists in the Lake District with different spellings — all refer in Old Norse to 'the dale of the peat moss' - where nearby settlements obtained peat for fuel. As darkness came we joined the Hardknott road and passed by Cockley Beck Farm -Wordsworth in his 5th sonnet described the building, 'the cottage rude and grey', yet in the 1920 s the Coultons offered a 'warm welcome' when the authors Barber and Atkinson of 'Lakeland passes' in 1924 noted a quotation on the cottage wall 'And in the darkest hours of urban depression I will sometimes take out the dog-eared map and dream awhile of more spacious days, and perhaps a dried blade of grass will fall out of it to remind me that I was once a free man on the hills' · A. H. Sidgwick Darkness prevailed as we walked up Wrynose Bottom and I later reflected on further advice by the authors 'don't crowd too much into the day, you are out for relaxation and not toil'

All references OS Explorer OL6 SW area



Glen Coe

9-10th January 2009

Hugh Taylor

Alan, Rod, Graham, Frank, Mel & Chris, Hugh.

The Glencoe meet in 2008 was stunning on the Saturday, and following a great spell of weather over the New Year, hopes were high for a repeat performance in 2009. Mel and Chris drove up from Nottinghamshire to Arnside on Friday morning, and I drove up with them in the afternoon, Angie unfortunately succumbing to the dreaded flu. Alan and Rod also drove up in the afternoon, and we met up with them to discuss Alan's arm with its torn ligament. Graham and Frank arrived later that evening just in time to sample some very nice Caledonian and Alloa beers. The forecast pinned up in the Clachaig bar was discouraging to say the least.

Saturday dawned wet and windy, as forecast. Alan and Rod set off for the Corbett, Mam na Gualainn, on the north side of Loch Leven, which I had previously done, whilst Chris, Mel, and I set off for the Corbett, Garbh Bheinn, on the south side of Loch Leven which Alan had previously done. After two hours of battling the wind and rain, and within 30 minutes of the top, we gave up as the wind had become too dangerous, and we ate our sandwiches back in the chalet. We later found out that Alan and Rod had also given up on their Corbett. A shopping trip to Nevis Sport in Fort William filled the rest of the afternoon, with Mel checking out rucksacks and sleeping bags for his forthcoming trip to Uganda and the Mountains of the Moon.

We met Graham and Frank in the pub that evening to find that they too had had a wet day walking in the woods around Appin. The music in the bar was some of the best that I have heard in the Clachaig, and made a nice change from the usual round of singers of the Wild Rover type in recent years. Skelpaig are a trio of young Scottish musicians consisting of Katherine Liley on fiddle, David Adam on border pipes, whistle, and flute, and David Sutherland completing the line up on guitar. The very classy playing, as well as impressing me, also managed to entertain the silver wedding party, keeping them bopping until the end at 11.30pm.

Sunday dawned wet and windy again, so all made a steady journey back home. With the turn out this year being so low, and the continuing poor weather, the future of this meet looks uncertain.

Brian's (Charlie's) Walk

10th January 2009

D. Birkett



The glorious spell of high pressure weather had to come to an end and so on the 11th January the heavens opened not before a dry, cold but overcast day was experienced on the annual memorial birthday walk for Brian (Charlie) Birkett. Twenty three Fellfarers and friends assembled at the County Hall under the leadership of that famous Prestonian - Bill Hogarth — at Kentrigg a further three joined the party. At Sandy Bottoms a large group of mallard cavorted in the icy water — nearing Carus Green golf club a dipper darted and skimmed the rippled surface of the River Kent.

The Sprint joins the Kent at Burneside and we gathered at the railway crossing before entering the Cropper domain below Tolson Hall. Hard frozen ground needed some attention as we climbed through the fields towards the busy A591, with vehicles hurtling by - the 'dash' was completed safely and we continued towards Bank Head passing two small frozen tarns, teeming with

mallard. Our intended route was changed when firing could be heard and stories of a difficult gamekeeper related so we climbed the steepening path through Halhead Nab for our butties and the 'crack'.

Just below Cunsick Fell summit we paused at Brian's place, I circulated a photograph provided by Colin Hunter of a youthful Brian and friends, conscious that a number attending had not known him. In a fit of mild culture I read a few verses from 'Fidelity' by our own Cumbrian bard W.W - this describes Red Tam under Helvellyn, Striding Edge and the James Gough faithful dog - an area enjoyed by all walkers and mountaineers. A decision was made to keep the visit to the fortified courtyard at Cunswick Hall for another occasion - this left only one course of action \cdot a dash for the Riilemans via the golf course and Serpentine woods.

Thanks Bill for a grand walk.

We later learnt that a 27th member turned up for the walk. I'll spare her blushes by not naming her. She turned up at County Hall half an hour too early, assumed we'd set off promptly and hurried away, thinking she would catch us up.......Ed.

Winter Walk Weekend at High House

"The weather's going to turn nasty at 4 o'clock"
16-17th January 2009

Friday. The Archivist stood, still wrapped up in his water-proofs and woolly hat, in the common room. He had turned on the lights but his visage was dark. The stove was unlit and the common room was uncommonly cold. He has just arrived. Daylight was fading and he was alone. Outside, little angry squalls battered the few tits who flew to the bird-table and then departed, disappointed, from its empty feeders. The words of Joe Strummer ran, although he wouldn't recognise the source, through his head: "Should I stay or should I go?"

"Go." was just winning by a nose when headlights pierced the gloom outside. A car rocked over the bridge and paused at the gate. A little figure scurried through the rain to let the car in.

"Bugger." said the Archivist, "Now I'll have to stay."

Half an hour later, the stove was alight and the Archivist, the Secretary and the Editor were ranged around it, sipping from steaming mugs of tea. Outside, it got wilder and wetter.

Another gleam of headlights: Mark arrived from Cheshire, without the family and raring to have a go at anything on offer. Then Clanger, awaiting guests, and finally, two and a half Smallwoods and Lottie. This weekend's team was complete, for now.

A problem arose: the Secretary had forgotten her sleeping bag (it was, somehow, the Editor's fault of course. Stuart saved the day by producing *Clanger's Emergency Sleeping Bag.* Three cheers for him.)

Stuart (and guests Brian and Dave) had their own agenda. The rest of us settled down for the evening, ignoring the rain blattering against the window-glass, to plan Saturday's fun. The forecast promised a risk of blustery showers, with sunny spells, until about 4 pm, when very nasty stuff would arrive. It also predicted blizzards on the tops.

Now, with 6 participants, of whom 3 were Shinscrapers, the planning of Saturday's walk included possibilities of climbs. Someone suggested a bus to Shepherd's, a climb on Brown Slabs, followed by a stroll to Watendlath and back to Rosthwaite for refreshments before catching a bus to Seatoller. Everybody grasped the idea with enthusiasm, mainly because: (A) It didn't include any serious walking in (potential) blizzards, and (B) more importantly, we didn't have to think of any more ideas and could get on with eating and drinking.......So that was that.

Before it go too late, we started thinking about enduring the long cold night. The Archivist had no problem, of course, having primed his sleeping bag with his Rupert Bear hottie-bottle.

It was a bit of a relief to get up and warmed-up on Saturday after a very cold night. Outside, though, the grey cloud was thin, and hinted that sun might be on the menu sometime during the day.

Stuart and his chums set off for Skiddaw via Ullock Pike. The Archivist had been taken ill in the night and had an uncharacteristic lie-in. The team had hoped that we might



have witnessed his first ascent of a route (above ground) for many years but it was not to be. We worried about him but he arose, assured us that he was recovering and would go home soon after breakfast. His jibes about the difference between our planned early start and the reality of our scarpering just before mid-day re-assured us that he was recovering. "It's ok, Fred", we said, "It's not going to turn nasty until 4 o'clock."

Bus timetables were ignored: one car was left at the Scafell car-park and one took us to Shepherd's. Isn't it wonderful that (at this time of year, anyway) you can still drive onto someone's private land in the Lake District and leave your car for as long as you want without seeing a single sign telling you to clear off, asking for money or limiting your time? High Lodore Farm is a National Treasure, or rather the people who farm there are.

We strolled under Shepherd's Crag, looking at the wet, slimy green rock on so many well-known climbs. We were the only ones there. Apart from the odd gust, the predicted winds seemed to have passed us by (actually the overhead clouds were zooming by) and we felt relaxed about the wet rock and the low temperature as we dropped our rucksacks and geared up below Brown Slabs. A short explanation of English climbing grades reassured Mark that climbs labelled 'Difficult' or 'Very Difficult' were actually quite easy. He hadn't climbed since his Uncle John had taken him, as a teenager, to Langdale and he asked us to consider him as a complete beginner.

We split into two teams, taking the two easiest routes on the crag, both Diffs of about 100 feet.



Lottie wasn't allowed to rope up; the Secretary declined to do so and, on trying the rock, George decided it was "too cold"

So we ended up with two ropes of two: Jason and Cheryl on Brown Slabs (Diff ** 1946) and Mick and Mark on the oldest route at Shepherd's: Brown Slabs Arete (Diff *** 1922).

The rock was cold and wet. Both leaders confessed afterwards to being apprehensive about being on 'real' rock. A winter at the climbing wall *might* put you into superb physical shape but never prepares you for the reality of the outdoor stuff, particularly in January. Perhaps Mark, shivering at the bottom of the crag and belaying after only a 2-minute lesson, was the most apprehensive of all but he was still grinning.

Jason followed his route, an obvious crackline running straight up the middle of the crag. Mick, on the more devious route, was seduced by the polished holds into following the 'wrong' route (Brown Slabs VD *** 1948) and found himself heading towards, instead of away from, Jason's line.

Both leaders put in an inordinate amount of protection (see confession above).

Both routes became drier as height was gained. The leaders were close enough to chat and, as the routes converged at the top, consider competing for holds. A bit like climbing at Kendal Wall on a busy evening. Sunlight lit up the top of the crag and both leaders, arriving almost simultaneously, basked in its glow, blowing numbed fingers back to life and beaming.

Skiddaw reared, sharp, sunlit, unsullied by cloud, behind a deep blue Derwentwater.



"I'm safe." we both called into the shadows below, and agreed that it was, just then, the best place to be.

Cheryl and Mark soon joined us and we squelched down the steep and awkward descent route to join Clare, George and Lottie. Mark, who'd climbed in trainers, was already asking about how to go about getting his first pair of rock shoes....

So addictions are born.

Cheryl and George left to meet the Second Wave of visitors at High House and Jason, Mark, Clare and Mick took Lottie for walkies, over the back of Shepherd's Crag, to the delightful path than runs alongside Watendlath Beck

to the hamlet.

The sky grew darker and the clouds seemed to be gathering pace overhead. The air grew colder. We checked our watches on the little packhorse bridge at Watendlath. It



was just after 3. "The bad weather's not coming until 4", we said, confidently.

It's only a short walk over Puddingstone Bank to Rosthwaite and although the trees below Bracken Platt and, over the other side, below Swanesty How, roared in the gathering wind, we seemed to be missed by its force. It was a comfortable stroll.

The view, under a lowering ceiling of cloud, as we dropped down to Rosthwaite, was surprising: We looked straight up the Seathwaite valley to the farm (not quite visible in the fading light). Taylorgill Force was prominent at the head of the valley and, surprisingly, Lingmell took centre-stage, perfectly framed in the deep notch between Great End and Great Gable.

We entered the Scafell Bar and grabbed the one remaining table. The place was busy with hikers who, like us, were finishing off their day in the best of all possible ways.

Mark put the pints of High Pike on the table and looked up. "Is that rain on the windows?" he said.

We looked. Blobs of rain were quickly covering the glass. Beyond, the trees below Yew Crag were disappearing as grey veils of rain raked across the fellside behind the pub. "What time is it?" someone asked.

It was exactly 4 o'clock.

Later, as we gathered round the roaring Romesse, we agreed that it had been a fine day:

The Smallwood guests, Sarah, Andy, Jack and Rueben, first-time visitors, had found their way to High House and were comfortably settled.

The Shinscrapers had made a good start on the New Year's Resolution of at least one climb outdoors every month, no matter what the weather.

Mark had got to grips with a crag and had apparently 'caught the bug'.

Stuart had had a superb day out with his chums: Skiddaw by Ullock Pike and Carl Side, with a descent by Bakestall and Whitewater Dash, followed by the rather long walk back on tarmac to the car.

The Anniversary Year was progressing nicely.

Revue of 2008 in Slides

20 January 2009

Bill Hogarth

Once again another good turn out at the Strickland Arms, where we were all treated to a year of Fellfaring slide show, and we weren't disappointed as Mick had gathered a large selection of pictures, a large majority of them were ones that Mick had taken himself, and some that had been sent to him from other members.

Lots of events were covered; some very amusing, and others mind jogging. We all thought the weather had been pretty poor last year. But no, not in Fellfarer land, the sun had shone constantly, well according to the slides it had.

It was a good entertaining night out, and maybe next year's slide show will be as good as this one, so keep clicking away, and taking those pictures.

The Ed will be happy to run a similar event next year, if the Committee thinks it's a good idea, but if there is anyone else who would like to edit and/or present the selection, get in touch. The jobs yours!

The 76th Annual General Meeting

30th January 2009

Copies of the full minutes are available, on request, from the Secretary but the main points from the AGM are:

John Peat retired after 34 years as President. Gordon Pitt was elected to replace him. The post of Vice-President was unfilled. John was presented with a framed painting of High House on behalf of the club in recognition of his 34 years of service. The painting was commissioned by the Committee for the occasion, was painted by Fred Underhill, and attracted many appreciative comments from the members (see page 14). John replied that his appointment as President in 1975 had caused him great happiness particularly after surviving his first walk with the club on Dunmail! He said it was good to see the club flourishing and becoming more active over the years.

Membership has increased by 8 over the past year bringing the total number of members to 140.

The Treasurer reported that expenditure exceeded income by £1,102.41 in 2008. A new stove for the men's dormitory had been purchased and over £1,300 had been spent on BMC membership fees. It was agreed to increase Club Membership Fees to £20 per member, from 1^{st} January 2010

The Hut Booking Secretary reported that last years 'nights booked' figure of 81 was one of the lowest on record and on a par with 2001. All weekends were fully booked, and the low figure was solely due to the lack of mid-week bookings.

The new Constitution was adopted. It had been re-written by a sub-committee after a BMC workshop suggested that we needed to update our document. It had been approved by the full Committee and sent to all members. The final document includes some further amendments suggested by a member.

The following amendments to High House Policy were agreed:

- 1. The £5 key deposit for High House has been increased to £10
- 2. Temporary keys are no longer available from the Hut Booking secretary.
- 3. Members can now book the whole of High House from Monday to Thursday nights at a discount.
- 4. Guest night fees have been increased from £4 to £5.
- 5. Guest night fees are payable for all guest's children, aged 5 and over.
- 6. Mixed-gender sleeping arrangements in all dormitories must be agreed by all members staying at the hut at the time. Discussion concluded that family groups should be given priority for use of the members room.

The 2008 Development Plan had listed a number of improvements which were not carried out for various reasons so the 2009 plan is broadly the same.

The existing Officers and Committee are prepared to continue in post and were re-elected.

Peter Ford and Gordon Pitt resigned as Trustees of the Lease. Mick Fox and Alec Reynolds will continue in post and Cheryl Smallwood and Vicky Weeks were elected as new Trustees.

An Appraisal of the Finances of K Fellfarers Club Membership

(Or, Where do your Membership Subs go?)

It has always been a golden rule of our Club Treasurers that the accounts of the club (membership and social events) be kept separate from those of High House, with neither subsidising the other.

In 2008, however, when the AGM elected, on the advice of the Committee, to join the BMC as club members, the club started to operate on a deficit budget. The Committee decided that, rather than impose a sudden big increase in membership subscriptions, it would phase in various changes to return to balancing the accounts over 2-3 years. It began by removing family membership and unwaged concessions. Meanwhile the shortfall in funding would be taken from the club reserves. The following is an illustration of where we are now:

Each member receives from the club:

Cost to the club of each member per year:	£ 8.75
Each member pays the club: Membership Subscription	£ 15.00
Social Events (AGM, slideshows, working weekend catering) and admin. costs	£ 11.75 £ 5.00 £23.75
Four newsletters (including postage)	£ 7.00

These are average figures and are based on our 2008 accounts. They do not pose an urgent problem at the moment but the Committee (and especially the Treasurer!) is anxious that we return to balancing our accounts as soon as possible.

Two members in one household share a single newsletter and therefore cost less than the figure shown. Members who have opted to receive the newsletter electronically will cost even less.

Note that next years increase in Membership Subscription to £20 will help but will not be enough on its own to resolve the matter, even if inflation is zero over the next 12 months. There will need to be further changes in income and/or expenditure before we can once more balance the books.

Changing World

It was back in 1994. Stan and Nancy Edmondson were still going strong at Seathwaite Farm and Stan was being interviewed for a newspaper article on the prodigious rainfall there. An extract from the article reads:

A lot of water has passed under the bridge since the day in 1926 when Stan Edmondson came into the world. In those days, there were only five cars in the whole Borrowdale valley and climbers and ramblers were tweed-trousered rarities. Now, on a summer's day, anything up to 200 cars and 500 fluorescent-clad, fresh-air seekers pass by Stan's front door. 'Worse than the rain, they are,' sighs Stan. 'Get everywhere, they do. It's all the safety equipment's done it; makes climbing easy. In the old days, climbers wouldn't have dreamed of using harnessesmind you, a lot of them got killed as a result.'

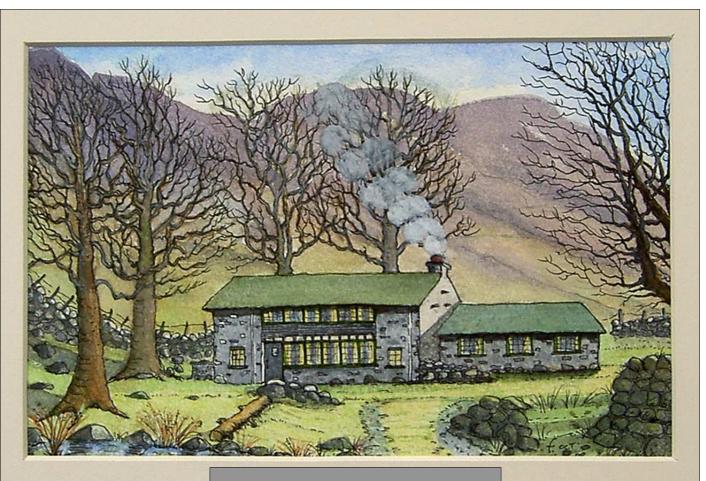
Page 2 puzzle:

This is the view, before being stretched on the computer, taken from Blawith Knott on 6th January 2009.

It shows, from the left: Dow Crag, Coniston Old Man and Wetherlam.

Did you get it?





" High House , Seathwaite " F. Underhill 2008

The Editor writes:

I wanted to write down a few thoughts on Fred's painting of High House.

What is this painting about? What does it mean? At first sight it appears to be a simple watercolour of a (let's be honest) not very pretty building tucked away in a Lakeland Dale.

I think the picture is much more than that. The artist has known this building for most of his life; and it shows. The simplicity of style belies the emotional honesty invested in the work. This is not a simple journeyman picture knocked out to satisfy a client wanting a near-photographic image of the subject.

I know that the artist suffered doubts after being commissioned to carry out the work. Why did he suffer? Being a self-taught water-colourist, specialising in humorous cartoons (often mocking club committee decisions, it seems!) and beginning late in life, he worried about whether he was 'up to the job'. Clearly he was.

In style it owes much to the work* of Alfred Bestall, the celebrated artist of the Rupert Bear Annuals. On first seeing Fred's three works for consideration for the presentation (Fred left the room—he didn't want to hear what we said), I remarked that I could just see, in those pictures, Rupert Bear stepping out of the High House front door. It was meant as a term of praise. I know that Fred considers Alfred Bestall to be an artist of the highest order and I agree with him.

What is special about this picture is that it is *not* a near-photographic image of the hut. It is easy to pick out a dozen or more minor inaccuracies if you compare it with a photograph. That doesn't matter! What does matter is that this is the real High House! The one in our hearts. This is how we remember it when we're stuck in Kendal, Dalkeith, Norwich, Tideswell, Chorlton, Nottingham, Barrow, wherever.....on a working day when the traffic is bad or the work is getting us down and there's only one place we want to be, to escape from it all. This is it.

That's what Fred has captured in his (I use the term carefully) work of art. Look at it.

Daylight is fading. The lights are on and smoke billows from the chimney. There are no cars there but you know you are in for a warm welcome when you step through the door. The place will be untidy with boots and kid's toys and cheese and playing cards and half-empty bottles. Old farts will be gathered around the stove dozing or retelling old stories. Nowadays, laptops will be lined up along the tables. It will feel good to be there. It's home, after all. It's where so many adventures have started and where so many more will be planned. There is no better picture of the real hostel imaginable.

And, who knows, when you do step inside, perhaps someone will have invited Rupert Bear to stay for the weekend!

*for more information on the life and on the superb and varied artistic works of Alfred Bestall see 'The Life and Works of Alfred Bestall' by Caroline G Bott, published by Bloomsbury and available in paperback.



Above.

Audrey, aged 15, climbing Dandle Buttress, Buckbarrow Crag in Longsleddale in 1941

Below:

Audrey, centre, with brother Malcolm and cousin Margaret at Margaret's home in 2008



Audrey Ferguson

9th August 1926-1st January 2009

It was a really sad start to 2009 to hear of the death of my cousin Audrey on New Years Day.

Audrey was born in a cottage in Yard 12, Green Road, Kendal, an only child to Maggie and Billy Ward. They soon moved to Castle Rise. She was proud to be a Kendalian in the old county of Westmorland. In her school days she did a lot of cycling, often visiting Arnside and Grange Baths; there were no cars in those days.

Audrey left school at 14 and worked in a shop called Beesley's, which sold Jaeger clothes, but soon moved to K Shoes where she joined the Fellfarers. She loved Borrowdale and the Hut or Hostel as it was known in those days. On Friday nights they used to cycle or catch the bus to Thirlmere and walk over the fells to the Hut. In Kendal she played badminton and went to the Town Hall dances with friends.

Then she met Myers and they would walk and climb in Borrowdale, Longsleddale and other parts of the Lakes. Audrey was perhaps unique as she welcomed walking in the rain. Myers and Audrey were married in 1947 and honeymooned on the Isle of Skye, climbing and walking everything in sight. A few years later Helen came along and then Val followed. Audrey and Myers spent many happy holidays at High House with the girls, she also loved caravanning and they would go to Wales with friends.

Audrey had a passion for fabrics and fashion, she liked nothing better than going to a shop or the market and buying a length of cloth, taking it home to her Mum, who was very skilled at making garments. Quite often, when a special dress for a dance or dinner was not finished on time, she would be stitched into it.

Audrey and Myers used to go walking in the Alps; they did the Tour of Mont Blanc and the Haute Route to name but two. She could speak French so they were alright with the natives.

The whole family went to Chamonix for her 80th birthday and again at Christmas 2007. She loved both these trips and enjoyed having her daughters and their husbands, grandchildren and great grandchildren all together for a big party.

She loved her garden and for every house she lived in she would buy plants and flowers and pack them into the beds. She liked the garden planted so she could not see the soil.

Audrey looked forward to our days out; most Thursdays we would wander round garden centres or shops, always with several coffee stops and lunch.

She will leave a big hole in my life and in the lives of everyone who knew her.

Margaret E. Atkinson.

The Chairman's Walk Saturday 7th February

D Birkett









On a bright but cold February morning fifteen Fellfarers met in the charming and affluent village of Barbon. As the clock chimed 10.00 we were ready for the off and followed the course of the famous Barbon Hill climb organised by the Westmorland Motor Club, racing vintage motor bikes and cars. Several Fellfarers had completed the course in the past and related their experiences. We continued up the access towards Barbon Manor - country home of Lord Shuttleworth and

walked on the broad bridleway through a plantation alongside Barbon beck. Halfway through the wood we realised that three persons were missing, including the Secretary.

The Editor 'hot footed' back along the bridleway to find the trio, he returned after 20 minutes, nought was found, 'They'll be alright, they have a car', so we continued. A tractor with three woodsman onboard, passed us having removed some fallen timber. Emerging from the plantation we encountered the 'lost' trio, 'where have you been' said Clare, a mainly cordial conversation ensued and we were on our way venturing ever deeper into Barbondale before joining the road where a group of huntsman were gazing ever skywards.

On the ridge leading to Castle Knott in the Middleton fells could be seen a strange structure, Walter gleaned from the followers that it was a Peregrine trap, built to mimic a craggy out look, when a bird alighted on a loaded trap door, its weight activated a mechanism and the bird descended into oblivion. Today the landowner would be gaoled, then the Laird's word was the law.

We left the road in a southerly direction towards Bullpot Farm above Ease Gill - the home of countless pothole systems in the Casterton fells. Alter a gentle climb, the ridge steepened and became trackless climbing over tussock grass and powder snow drifts. Fellfarers went in all directions, choosing lines to the highest point of Barbon Low Fell. This is open access land, not all walls have stiles, so a wall was carefully negotiated and afforded shelter for our butty break.

Lively discussion took place during the break about comments by a so called celebrity about our beleagured premier and a former premier's daughter's description of a wild-haired tennis player coming to the fore.

After lunch we had a short walk to the trig point at 437m; the views of the Lake's summits were stunning, nearby was Gragareth and the Leck fells, hopefully to be included in the Dales National Park in the near future. The Cumbrian coastline was punctuated by dappled sunlight with Arnside and Silverdale looking particularly inviting. The descent was by a clear track joining an iced pathway and walled lane leading to the Casterton road. The area is rich in ancient settlements, cairns and field systems adding to the interest. The final section of the walk was along a bridleway where Andy Goldsworthy stone art was on view in the form of massive stones set in sheepfolds. Pleasant footpaths through farmland concluded the walk with a carpet of snowdrops lining the access to the stately home at Whelprigg before crossing the old railway line from Skipton to Lowgill.

The majority of Fellfarers retired to the comfortable Barbon Inn to conclude a excellent day with good company and an area rarely visited by the club.

Thank you Roger for a grand day out and in a fine location.













Words are unnecessary really!



April

The committee will meet on **Tuesday 7th April** at The Rifleman's Arms. We'll be discussing what Yvon Chouinard meant when he recommended climbers to: "Get into good physical conditioning by training.....unless you are English." Come and join us for a pint.

3-4th April 2009 Clapham Hut Meet

Lowstern Hut (Yorkshire Ramblers) Grid reference 736691.



"...in a secluded position in a small wood surrounded by farmland about half a mile from Clapham village." AN IDEAL BASE FOR EXPLORATION OF INGLEBOROUGH AND THE NORBER / MOUGHTON / SULBER LIMESTONE PAVEMENTS

Sleeps 16

£7 per person per night

Details: Peter Goff

9 - 12th April 2009



is booked for the Club It's Easter! Tuesday 21st April 2009 A Short Slideshow

Fungus-Spotting



& Social Evening
Strickland Arms
7.30

Guests €2 per person
Buffet provided

STOP PRESS: John Peat will lead an afternoon walk on SATURDAY 25TH APRIL Starting from St Mary's Church (GR 410 988), Windermere, on the A591.

Parking available nearby or bus from Kendal bus station: 12.30 pm

Meet at approx 1 pm (when the bus arrives) for a 3 hour walk to Ambleside.

Return by bus or on foot - to be arranged on the day.

23 April 2009

Climbing For All

The first outdoor climbing evening of the summer. Everyone welcome



Hutton Roof Crag GR 565 782

Meet there at any time between 6 pm and sunset, then in the Riflemans Arms from 10 pm.

May

1-3rd May 2009

High House
is booked for
the Club

Birthday Party



Booking Essential

See page 2 for details

Tuesday 12th May 2009 Sunset Walk



Winder from Sedbergh

Meet at Joss Lane car-park, Sedbergh

7.15 pm

For more information: call Hugh Taylor

23-30th May 2009 Camping Meet Assynt

Western Sutherland



Clachtoll Campsite,
www.clachtollbeachcampsite.co.uk
just north of Lochinver
OS Landranger 15
GR NCO40 274
Superb hillwalking,
caving, canoeing,
birdwatching, beaches
For more information:
call Hugh Taylor

22-30th May 2009 Spring Bank Holiday

High House is booked for the Club



(for those who don't want to go to Assynt, that is)

June

The Committee will meet on Tuesday 2nd June at The Rifleman's Arms. We'll be trying to find out whether anyone cares about apathy in the club. Come and join us for a pint.

Tuesday 9th June 2009 **Evening Walk**

From: Low Jock Scar To: Whinfell Tarn and back, a circular walk of about $6^{1}/_{2}$ miles.



Start: 6.30 pm Meet at road junction on the A6, 5 miles north of Kendal Grid Ref NY 541 010 For more info, call Roger

Atkinson



Fun and games for children of all ages, including an orienteering adventure, party on Saturday night and ATT race on Sunday

Contact Jason on 01539 738451

₹^^^^



20-27th June 2009 (approximately)

Alps Meet

The Shinscrapers are camping and climbing in

Ailefroide

(on the Eastern Edge of The Ecrins National Park in the French Alps) There's lots of walking there too and everyone is welcome!

Some will be driving there & staying longer. There'll be lots of opportunities for everyone to do whatever interests them in this glorious mountain region. Interested? Call Jason or

Cheryl on 01539 738451. Full details available early April

July

The Committee will meet on Tuesday 7th July at The Rifleman's Arms. We'll be trying to find out whether anyone cares about apathy in the club. Oh, that's last month. It doesn't matter, though. No-one will notice and, frankly, I can't be bothered to change it. Come and join us for a pint.

3-4 th July 2009 It's 1934! Are you up to the challenge? High House is booked for

us to recreate the pioneering spirit of the club's early days. Please yourself how much you take part once you've arrived but there is one hard and fast rule:

NO CARS MUST BE USED TO GET THERE!

For More Information Call Bill Hogarth

Tuesday 7th July 2008

A Walk around

Middlebarrow

(rained off last year)



Meet at 6pm at Eaves Wood Carpark OS map OL7 GR 470759 Details: Peter Goff

Mid-week Mid-July 2009 **Evening Walk**

The Last President's Walk



Details in the July copy of the Fellfarer

Sunday 19th July 2009 A Walk on the Fells Meet at 9.15 am at Kendal Bus Station Start at: Stannah Sticks Pass - Raise -Helvellyn - Grisedale Tarn - Tongue Gill



Finish: Traveller's Rest, Grasmere (about 9 miles) More info: Roger Atkinson

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 Alec Reynolds
 Tel: 01229 821099

 Cheryl Smallwood
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OUR CLUB

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High House Website: www.k-fellfarers.co.uk.
High House (and farm) Postcode: CA12 5XJ

High House OS ref: Explorer OL4 grid ref. 235119

OUR PARTNERS

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

BMC Website: www.thebmc.co.uk

Each Fellfarer has an individual Membership Number

• RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION Website: www.ramblers.org.uk

Fellfarers RA Membership Number: 1273727

 OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB (Reciprocal Rights Partnership)

Oread Website www.oread.co.uk

Oread huts -available to Fellfarers at the following rates:

Heathy Lea Cottage Baslow, Derbyshire.

£2.50 per person, per night

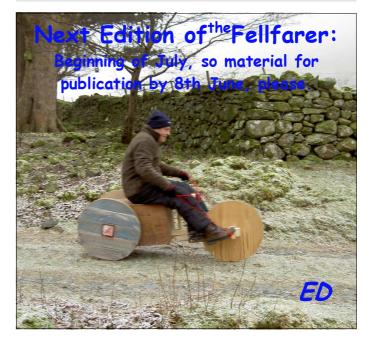
Tan-y-Wyddfa Rhyd-Ddu, North Wales. O.S. Ref. 570527

Fellfarers: £3 p.p.p.n., Guests: £6 p.p.p.n.

Oread Booking Secretary: Colin Hobday

28, Cornhill Allestree Derby DE22 2FS

Tel: 01332 551594



A full colour version of this newsletter is available on our website: www.kfellfarers.co.uk