

the Fellfarer

October 2009

Number 55



Editorial

It's a funny view of this rather unpleasant modern world from up here, high in the fastness of Fellfarer Towers. The silence is only interrupted by the clunk of the keys on my rusting Remington typewriter, by the Raven forever quoting "Nevermore" from above my door and, occasionally, by the loud (and frankly distressing) swearing and blinding of the Secretary as she sweats over the winding handle of the Gestetner copying machine.

I sit, gloomy and disconsolate, among the moth-eared books and yellowing manuscripts, in my dusty room.

Sometimes I sit and think. Sometimes I just sit.

I feel like I'm waiting but for what? Or for whom? Like Estragon, I don't know, quite. I wait with a gloomy sort of optimism but I cannot remember why. Will someone or something come soon. Not today perhaps but tomorrow? The days go by, unmarked by human intervention.

Sometimes the gloom lifts a little and I pull aside the crumbling and faded curtain to gaze out into the deserted fog-bound street below. Wet pavements gleam in the hideous gaslight and shadows hide I know not what rankness.

"What," I wonder, in those rare moments of cognition, "have those lively fellows *The Fellfarers* been up to today?"

You will let me know, won't you?

Ed

PS Actually this issue was nearly a 24-pager. Some articles have been compressed and some held over, until the next issue, this time. Thank you to all contributors

The 75th Anniversary Quiz Night

It is now confirmed for **Wednesday 14th October** at the **Strickland Arms** with a **19:30** start.

The event is open to members only with Jason Smallwood acting as Master of Ceremonies.

The quiz will consist of 5 rounds of 15 questions (yes that's 75) covering Local Flora, Lake District Landmarks, Kendal, The Great Outdoors and General Knowledge (Watch out for the Fellfarer related bonus questions!).

We will have teams of 4 or 5 and you can come with your team ready assembled or we can organise on the night!

There will be Prizes (What do points make?)

Here's a couple of questions to start you off, or put you off:

1. Which South Lakeland hamlet only has three quarters?
2. What is a "cragger" ?

Answers below.

Answers
1. Kentmere has three quarters: Hallow Bank Quarter, Crag Quarter and Green Quarter.
2. No, it's not a climber. The New Edition of the Collins English Dictionary says:
"cragger, a member of a carbon reduction action group."

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Cover picture:

Jessica Walsh competing at the Kids Weekend
13th June 2009

Contents Picture:

Fellfarers leaving High House on the Car-Free Weekend
5th July 2009

Back Page:

The Torrent de la Combe
26th June 2009

75th Celebration at Kendal Town Hall

Arrangements are now being finalised for the climax of the 75th Anniversary year's events. The 75th Anniversary Celebration, at Kendal Town Hall, will be a fitting finale to a great year of

celebration for the club and will take place on

Saturday 28th November 2009

Highlights of the evening will include performances by K-Shoes Male Voice Choir, memories of the club and K-Shoes from long standing members, an exhibition and slideshow on the history of the club, not to mention the chance to catch up with old friends over a pint or two! There will be a finger buffet and bar and one last chance to order from a range of clothing featuring the 75th Anniversary logo.

There will also be an opportunity to pre-order (at a discount) copies of the forthcoming book **"K Fellfarers and High House"**

Doors will open at 6:45 p.m, to ticket holders only, and the evening will end at approximately 10:30 p.m

Details of how to get hold of tickets are included in a letter sent to you by the Secretary. If you have offered to help with the buffet you will be contacted at the beginning of November.

If you haven't replied yet, please do so quickly - the number of tickets is limited and they are going fast!



CLUB NEWS

There is now a **Club Noticeboard (called Swap Shop) on the Website**. It will feature any item that club members want to post on there. It already includes some Lost Property left at High House (sleeping bag, overtrousers, baseball cap, ladies watch, Wainwrights Pictorial Guides to the Fells) and items for sale by members. It will perhaps be most useful to *parents whose children outgrow their gear before it's worn out*. If you want something or have something to dispose of, please email the details to Hugh Taylor.

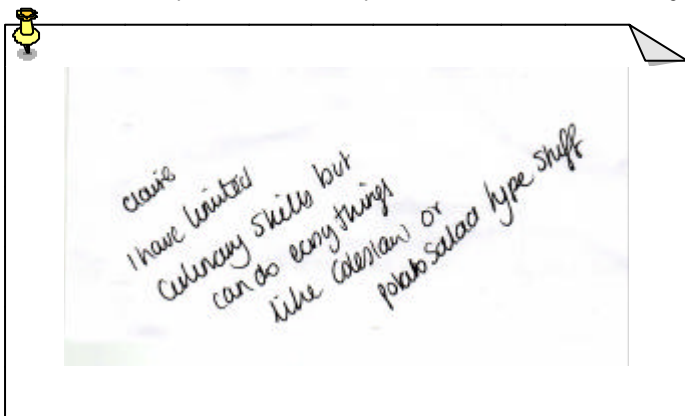
A **Fire Risk Assessment** has recently been carried out by the Health and Safety Officer for South Lakeland (and new club member) Sam Bracken. The Committee has always known that the structure of High House is a potential problem in that a fire, once established there, would burn unchecked throughout the building. The walls and floor would not stop smoke and flames from filling the whole building very quickly. In the event of such a fire, there would be no effective help from the Fire Brigade in Keswick- the nearest phone is in the farmyard and the bridge won't support the weight of a fire engine. The Assessment showed that, on balance, the measures introduced (smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, planned improvements to the fire escapes, etc.) have almost balanced out the risk posed by the building itself. Almost but not quite. The Assessment concludes that a few improvements are needed. The Committee is now in the process of improving Fire Escape Notices etc. but the Assessment stresses the need to ban two activities: the use of candles and the cooking of chips. So, until we manage to rebuild the interior of High House to make it absolutely safe if a fire breaks out, there are two cast iron rules for everyone staying at High House: **No Candles. No Frying of Chips**

Note that there will be no Club Bonfire Night Party this year. The usual date clashes with our Remembrance Day (Armistice) weekend at High House. There will, however, be a **Halloween Party** on 31st October, where some deserving (fictional) character will no doubt be doused in red diesel and set afire. Not Guy Fawkes though Quiet fireworks only. We don't want to stampede the neighbour's cattle again. See the Social Calendar on pages 18-19 for details.

Note also that the **December slideshow is at a new venue: Kendal Golf Club**. The show is by new members Graham and Irene Ramsbottom and, judging by the photographs given to the Editor for the newsletter, it promises to be an awe-inspiring set of images. Look at the pictures in the full-colour version of the newsletter on the website. Don't miss it!

The Committee hopes that members are already planning and building their vehicles for the **ATT Trials** on 31st December. The competitors have introduced some new rules - see page 17.

Do you recognise the handwritten note below? If you do, the Secretary has received your request for two tickets to the **Town Hall Celebration** in November. Unfortunately you didn't include your name or contact details. Let Clare know who you are as soon as possible and she promises to not let on to anyone else!



In January there will be a
**Slideshow Review of the
Fellfarer's Anniversary Year (2009).**

Please submit the best pictures of **your** year to the Editor in good time for inclusion.
(that means preferably before Christmas)

They do not have to be taken at club events or at High House. We want just good shots of Fellfarers having fun. Even if you can't turn up for the show, send us pics with details of who, when and where.

NOTICE

The Lodge Hotel Meet in Newtonmore 18th to 22nd March 2010 (5 nights)

After our successful stay in Newtonmore in March this year we have once again booked the Lodge Hotel in the beautiful Cairngorm National Park. This is an ideal venue for walkers, climbers, photographers and cyclists.



The cost will be £130 per person (based on 2 sharing) and includes dinner, bed and breakfast.

Single room supplement - £9.50 per person per night. All rooms are en-suite with T.V, hairdryer and hospitality tray.

To book your place please contact Clare Fox by phone or email as soon as possible.

Mount Rosea Southern Australia

A Short Walk in the South - Number 2
30th December 2008

Alec Reynolds

After spending three weeks in the stunning beauty of Australia's Red Centre, I was expecting to be a little disappointed in Southern Australia but, as it turned out, it was just as impressive and of great variety. We spent three weeks in South Australia and Victoria and visited several different mountainous National Parks: Flinders, Mount Remarkable, Southern Grampians and the Otways, not to mention the Great Ocean Road. The latter is a couple of hundred miles of stunning scenery stretching along the Victoria coastline. It was built as a First World War Memorial, a novel but most fitting achievement, there being no coast road previously.

It was a difficult task to select a single day from such a range of experience, but I finally settled on Mount Rosea in the Southern Grampians.

We spent three days at Halls Gap and had three splendid mountain walks. The ascent of Mount Rosea is typical of the majority of mountain walks we did in Australia - beautifully sloped footpaths that lead you to the top at a very acceptable angle. However, this means that a great deal of distance is travelled to gain the height. The ascent of Mount Rosea is a combination of such inclines combined with several flat sections requiring some clambering through boulders, including a few short rock tunnels.

The top of the mountain is typical of many we ascended or saw in Australia - a fairly gentle escarpment leading to a vertical edge at the summit. The fence at the top is unsightly but necessary. It would be all too easy to walk or run across the flat approach to the summit and go straight over.

The return was via the same route, which gave us plenty of time to view the scenery and in some places clean, vertical rock just begging for a Shinscrapers' trip...



as Alice had to take it for a short excursion climbing up to the top of the slabs. I opted out of the climbing and decided instead to take artistic pictures of our egg (which by then had eyes, a mouth, and nose; Eggplantine) in front of stunning views. After descending Sour Milk Ghyll the adventure was cut short in favour of ice cream at the farm shop, but it was still very enjoyable and our egg didn't crack. Yesssss! The boy's teams had all cracked their eggs and had to use points to get a fresh one for the final test. Unfortunately despite our best efforts to protect it, it was ours that cracked in the final drop shame!!

The rest of the evening was spent in three ways. The younger children danced round the fire, collected wood and drew charcoal moustaches on their faces. While the older children (Molly, George, Charlie, Alice and I) decided to go for a much more mature game, Twister, with lots of falling over involved. The ever sensible adults even older children retreated inside for drinks. After such a tiring day and the magnificent barbecue tea, we all voted that we leave them alone to enjoy themselves.

Sunday morning was a muddle of good-byes, sock retrieving and plans for next year. It had been an amazingly fun, well planned weekend. I suspect many of the party goers being thoroughly exhausted caught forty winks on the journey back home. I, for one, hope that the event will be repeated next year with even more splattered eggs and flap-jack! So, a big thank you from all the kids to Cheryl and Jason and everyone else who helped to make the weekend such a great success.



Question: What was the best bit of the weekend?

Kids :

- "It was nice!" – Soren Greasley
- "I like the hut because you can climb!" – Nye Greasley
- "Throwing the egg out of the window!" – Jessica Walsh
- "Going on the Treasure Hunt!" – Katie Stafford-Roberts
- "Lighting fires in the pit!" – Alice Lee
- "Staying in the hut!" – Ollie Lee
- "It was warm and sunny!" – Remy Greasley
- "Bringing down the giant log from the top of the hill!" – Adam Heseltine
- "Having a fire with no adults!" – George Smallwood

Teenagers :

- "Playing Tiggy Four Eyes (outside)" – Claire Heseltine
- "Playing Twister outside!" – Molly Greasley
- "Playing outside" – George Stafford-Roberts
- "The Trail Tiggy was fun!" – Charlie Stafford-Roberts

"Remember, our children are the future – unless we stop 'em."
Homer Simpson



Marion Duff, Fellfarer, Rock Climber, Mother, Lover and Friend 1921-2009

Jim Duff, Bundagen Community, NSW Australia, 17 September 2009

Marion was born in 1921 and spent her early years in the Blue Houses area of Kendal at the bottom of the House of Correction Hill. This was quite a rough area as you might infer from the head injury she got when attacked as a seven year old by a rock hurling gang. This resulted in years of severe headaches which were miraculously cured by a traveling faith healer in a tent on Aynam road when she was in her twenties.

Her dad, 'Biff' Morris, got his nickname for being the regimental boxing champ. Biff spent four years in the WW1 trenches throwing Mills bombs, getting wounded three times plus a wiff of mustard gas. It was while convalescing from one of these wounds that he met Elsie Morgan, a full-blooded Welsh lass who boldly asked him out. Biff also served in WW2, captained the Kendal rugby team and ended his days in the Alms Houses overlooking the river Kent living on his British Rail pension.

Marion showed the first inklings of her adventurous nature when she went off to Paris on a school trip aged 14. She was so impressed by the elegant cigarette-smoking blondes in the cafes that once home she dyed her hair blonde, and despite Biff's most terrible threats, continued to do so till she passed away. This trip was probably the source of her lifetime love affair with Balkan Sobranies.

They moved to Castle Grove council estate and it was from there that she got her start at the K Boot and Shoe factory 'blacking ladies bottoms'. One of her formative influences was Harry Mawson who helped her get started fell walking. On the very first jaunt Harry named every mountain as they drove up into the lakes; so amazed was Marion that she swore to learn them all herself. She became a tireless walker, never complaining of cold or rain on the family march from Langdale to the hut and back.

Like her Welsh mother she boldly approached her first and only boyfriend by leaving a note on his bike in the bike sheds by Netherfield Bridge. They were around 16 when they started dating. They were married in the early years of the war, dad in his army uniform, at Preston Patrick church, honeymooning at the Borrowdale Hotel. They both loved the outdoors, found escape from the five-and-half day working week as fell-walkers and were keen cyclists. One of their holidays was a tandem ride to London to see a ballet, with a stop in Stratford on Avon for a Shakespeare play. Alec reckoned he often caught her with her feet up.

During the early years of the war she fell in with some of the local rock climbers including Jim Birkett, watching the first ascent of 'F' Route from Ash Tree Ledge and seconding Amen Corner on 'B' route, all on Gimmer Crag. Getting bored of hanging around waiting for the boys to finish with the hard stuff, she took up with Dot Bewley and they became one of the first all female working class rock climbing teams. I'm not sure what routes they did together but it was a bold undertaking.

Children and work put paid to climbing but in latter years Marion managed her famous solo of Middlefell Buttress, barefoot, skirted and pregnant with Alexandra. Her swansong was Gimmer Chimney with its brutal thrutchy chimney pitch, aged 45.

Bill was born in 1943, a war baby and the apple of Marion's eye keeping her company through those dark years and Alec's convalescence from his wounds. I came out "yelling and furious" in 1947 and the family seemed complete till we were all surprised by the arrival of the delightfully happy Alexandra in 1958. Bill took to potholing in a serious way and took an Honours degree in Electrical Engineering aided by his photographic memory. His life was tragically cut short in a car crash along with his mate Tom Freeman in 1968. This was devastating for Marion and she never really got over it.



"The Girls, Silver Creek. 1955" Marion is 2nd. left.

From the Peter O'Loughlin Collection

Marion's greatest virtue was her unassuming generosity of spirit. During her life she looked after her parents as they aged, three elderly spinster aunts who passed in slow succession, took in a cousin when times were hard without missing a beat, and was there every day as Alec declined in the grip of Parkinson's disease. The door was open to all comers and come they did, sometimes by the busload. Her greatest weakness was her inability to say 'no'; a seemingly harmless trait that made her a haven of love for many a stricken person, but that also bogged her down at times.

Throughout these years 'The Hut' was the pivot around which our family revolved. Its social web, fun and friendships, celebrations, parties, walks, yarns and songs knitting a cosy web that embraced us through times good and bad. Those earliest Fell Farers enjoyed a golden age of simple fun and affection for the hills and each other born out of necessity. Long hours at the factory, lack of money and a thirst to be outside, combined with access to that jewel of a mountain area produced the hut, but love provided the fuel that made it all so worthwhile.

When I think of Ma the memories often revolve around The Hut, down at the farm with Nancy or walking up to Stockley Bridge. I know for a fact that her happiest days were on the hills and at The Hut with her friends and family. Let's remember her that way.

Our 1953 family holiday in France by car was another indication of Ma's adventurous nature, for it was her idea and off we went. The first family from our council estate to go to the continent for a holiday and not for war we returned two weeks later to cheers as we rattled back into Castle Grove. Memories of that trip include Ma cooking on a primus stove, frying pan in hand, in a cheap hotel in Paris. The other, in Agay on the Med, is of her delight on finding that the campers next door had left behind an orange crate, which meant she now had something to put the stove on when cooking.

Consider Marion's work history, apart from years at K Shoes. She was a nurse's aid during the war years at a burns unit in Manchester (where a distant coal heap was the only reminder of the hills she missed). After retiring they ran a café in Kirkby Lonsdale for a few years, an episode worthy of a soapie as the trade went from a trickle to coach loads, probably on Ma's insistence on providing the endless cup of tea for free. She did Meals on Wheels for years and also community transport. Her final and favourite job was driving a Securicor van, haring through the country lanes to Sedburgh (where she managed to lock down the bank for 48 hours) and the South Lakes. Her own wheels included her beloved minis (she won two in the same Conservative party raffle on separate occasions, good going for a life long Labour voter) and soft top Triumph Heralds. She cleaned up a milk truck near Natland and a herd of cows behind Crooklands, the latter resulted in her handing in her licence aged 80.

One Of The Last True Wildernesses

A Cruise in the Arctic Circle 15-25 June 2009

Graham and Irene Ramsbottom



Most people said "Oh that's different" or "Why are you going there in the middle of summer?" when we said we were going to the Arctic on a Russian ice breaker ship for our holiday. Svalbard or Spitsbergen is a group of islands the size of Wales well within the Arctic circle and is managed by Norway on behalf of the world. It is as far away from us as the middle of Africa. For a few months in summer the ice breaks up around its shores enabling a few ships to see its grandeur and wild-life.

Our 100 berth ship enabled us to slip effortlessly into the Fjords taking in the breathtaking views from every angle. We were often found open mouthed on deck wondering how you would climb that ridge or ski down that pristine snow covered slope. [In our dreams]

Limited climbing does take place but there are no roads on the Island and the compass requires some strange calculations to correct for magnetic North. There are areas in the far North where the correction consists of taking away 140 degrees! Map reading becomes quite difficult.

For anyone who appreciates truly wild places and being surrounded by jagged glaciated mountains dropping into the sea set against a blue sky it takes some beating. There are over 2650 glaciers on the islands. It was 24 hr daylight and the sun never went anywhere near the horizon so it was difficult to tear yourself away and go to bed.

The sea ice prevented us from circumnavigating the island but we did get within 10 degrees of the North Pole, celebrating with a laced hot chocolate in very cold conditions, wind chill factor of minus 40 degrees. The rest of the time the sun shone and it was relatively warm.

We were able to explore the environment from the Zodiacs which are inflatable dinghies with an outboard motor. We got a close up view of birds, glaciers and the sea ice whipped up fascinating shapes and small icebergs. The Zodiacs also enabled us to land on the Tundra and do some walking where we witnessed an arctic fox eating a kittiwake, reindeer, walrus many nesting birds and seals. The wildflowers were just appearing as the snow retreated and added their own beauty.

Did you see polar bears everyone asks? Well yes we did after a bit of a bear hunt. It was a real privilege to see them and observe their behaviour in their own isolated and fragile environment. There were several experts on board including a professor who had studied Polar bears for 40 years and they added greatly to the whole experience.

All this with good food and comfortable cabins made it a trip of a lifetime which we will never forget. It also made us realise what a fragile world it is and the fight we need to save it.



Below: Hornsundtind mountain, 1431metres high, first climbed by Germans in 1938. There are 8 glaciers on the mountain. The photo was taken at twenty to midnight.



North Wales Meet

Rhyd Ddu

19-20 June 2009

Hugh Taylor and Mel Middleton

By Llyn Cau on Cadair Idris



Caban Cadair Idris Bunkhouse

Last year, this meet was oversubscribed causing Mel and Chris to spend two nights in the Snowdon Ranger YHA just up the road, but this year was rather different. Having decided to spend a couple of nights around Cader Idris beforehand, I collected Mel from Stockport station and we headed down through Llangollen with Mel pointing out sections of the Offa's Dyke path that he and Chris had completed last year.

We arrived at the Caban Cader Idris Bunkhouse having failed to secure two nights at Corris. An old school house in a lovely rural location, the inside turned out to be rather scruffy, seedy, and neglected, but provided quiet accommodation for us for 2 nights.

Thursday dawned cloudy but we drove round to Minffordd car park and walked up towards Llyn Cau prior to breaking out to the left to gain the ridge of the horseshoe. Passing over Craig Cwm Amarch we dropped down and ascended into the cloud to gain the summit of Cader Idris itself in the cloud. The shelter on the summit, though crowded, was welcome in the cool damp air as we ate our lunch. Taking a bearing, we proceeded to the summits of Mynydd Moel and Gau Graig before dropping down to the old road and a pleasant walk back to the car. We can recommend the George III pub at Penmaenpool for its range of real ale and its food, to say nothing of its superb location overlooking the Mawddach Estuary and the disused railway line to Dolgellau.

On Friday, we walked from the bunkhouse to enjoy two hills to the west of Cadair, Craig-y-Llyn and Tyrrau Mawr. It turned into a nice ridge walk with no one else around until we hit the Cadair path. On our return we packed up and drove to Rhyd Ddu, expecting to meet up with other people: and therein lies a tale!

On our arrival, we found that there had been an accident in the village, with a car hitting a telegraph pole bringing the line down. With traffic backed up both ways, we managed to sneak into the public car park and into the Oread car park. We assumed that other people were held up in the traffic jam as no one else had arrived, but by 7.30 we were

starting to get concerned - what happens if no one else turned up? Noticing that an upstairs window was open, we started to build a tower of garden furniture before think it was getting silly, and borrowed a ladder from a neighbour instead. Having gained access to the building, and completing our meal, we walked down to the pub to see what price the beer was this year. At £3.10 it was no cheaper than previous years, but the range was as good as ever. On the way back to the bunkhouse, we noticed that the new café on the top of Snowdon looked like a lighthouse with its lights shining. No one else had arrived during our time at the pub, and we began to think we were here on the wrong weekend.

Saturday dawned very wet so we decided to sit it out until lunch time. It started to ease by midday and by 2 pm we were on our way to that loveliest of hills Cnicht, the 'Matterhorn of Wales'. I'd done it previously, but Mel had only passed it by from the north as he was undertaking the Cambrian Way. We walked up the normal route from Croesor, and carried on to the head of Cwm Croesor and its slate quarries. Having negotiated the remains of the quarrying activities, we returned down the valley to a lovely evening.

Sunday was dry but cloudy, so we decided on Mynydd Mawr at the back of Rhyd Ddu. The top was in thick cloud as we took a bearing to enable us to drop down to the north end of Llyn Cwellyn. Having negotiated a horrendous descent we gained the lake with relief and walked along the waters edge back to Rhyd Ddu. On our arrival we met Bob Pettigrew from Oread who had arrived expecting to see lots of Fellfarers on their weekend meet. We were all mystified that there was only the two of us, and it was equally galling to read in the Visitor Book that Kendal MC had managed a good turn out only a few weeks before.

A steady drive back to Stockport to drop Mel off finished a worthwhile visit to Wales, but disappointing and frustrating that no one else turned up, especially the key holder!

Ed's note: the keyholder did turn up - the following weekend!

The Shinscrapers in Ailefroide

19-29 June 2009

Introduction: The Ed and the Secretary travel to the Alps on the way to joining the rest of the gang:

We're across the Channel. No plans. Just an agreement to meet the others in a couple of weeks time deep in the French Alps. The camping gear in the back of the car. Bright sun in a blue sky. Let's head east.

We stop off at Ronchamp to see Le Corbusier's astounding Chapel of Notre Dame and to explore the equally astonishing fortifications of nearby Belfort.

Chamonix is a revelation. I've not been here this early in the year before and I naively expected the summer tourist season to be in full swing. Campsites are empty, some with grass knee-high. The telepheriques are silent and unmoving and hotel windows are shuttered against the bright June sunshine. Summer doesn't start here until July, it seems.

We do find a campsite, a very nice one, and spend a day or two here walking and climbing on roadside crags before setting off towards unknown territory - the Vanoise.

We come to rest at a municipal campsite at St-Michel-de-Maurienne, outside the National Park. It's an excellent base for a day or two's exploration. We pass, by chance, a sign to Les via ferrata du Diable in a spectacular limestone gorge between two ancient redoubts. I turn the car around and soon we're stepping out onto the vertical rock, hanging hundreds of feet above the river Arc, our new lanyards very reassuring in this vertiginous situation. It's Clare's first Difficile and she copes well. We treat ourselves to congratulatory ice-cold drinks afterwards.

More sunny days of exploration, more via ferrata, follow and then it's time to meet up with our chums. A breath-taking journey over the Col de Lauteret and down past Briancon takes us to Ailefroide, a couple of hours before their expected arrival.....

When the Second Wave of Shinscrapers arrive on the 19th June - Cheryl, Jason, Peter, Bill and Richard, several hours late and full of adrenalin after a very 'interesting' and very long drive from Nice, we all pitch tents in our own little clearing in the wood and settle in. The sun is shining on the snow and on the rock walls and towers thousands of feet above us. The evening air is warm. The bar is a couple of minutes walk away. Firewood has been gathered and the hammock has been slung between two trees. Everybody is beaming. Adventures start here. The (traditional) toilet is an adventure in itself. It flushes automatically and rather too enthusiastically.

We get into our rhythm right on day one: Lazy breakfast, wander up to the bar for morning coffee, talk about climbing. Much later we shoulder our gear and set off for a crag. On the first day we head for 'Sous La Fissure' which is an 'ecole' (often used by groups of children). The bridge has been washed away so we take a long way round which, happily, takes us through the most wonderful flower-filled meadows (see Peter's article overleaf). It's hot and we don't actually get round to climbing..... You're beginning to get the picture!

Actually there is much serious climbing during the week for some, not only on this crag but on 'Rainbow Warrior', 'Draye' and 'Petite Dalles', all only a few minutes from our tents and all on granite with superb friction but no holds. A different sort of climbing.

The Third Wave, comprising Steve, Jill, Mike and Kath, arrives a couple of days later and our party of 11 is complete.

After three days of climbing delicately up steep slabs, a break-away party develops. Peter, Richard, Bill, Clare and I walk up to the Glacier Blanc. Two of us have been here before but it's no hardship to repeat a walk this spectacular. The path is as



Cheryl climbing ↑ Richard & Bill on way to Glacier Blanc ↓



busy as a Lakeland path on a Sunday afternoon but that's no hardship either. Nothing can distract from the awe-inspiring sight of those pinnacles and impending ice-walls around us.

Steve has an early start and explores those seemingly inaccessible pinnacles above the glacier.

Mike's enthusiasm is unbounded and his climbs just get harder and harder. Jason and Cheryl manage another epic - only a short distance from the epic they had last time they were here - and finish just before nightfall.

The days pass. We still have lazy breakfasts and sunlit morning coffees. We try out more via ferrata, more climbs. We spend time gazing at innumerable snow-capped peaks. We bask on the sunny uplands, surrounded by aromatic flowers and drowsy bees, or wandering quiet valleys between falls of tumbling meltwater. The evenings are spent in laughter, good company and good food in the bar or around our bonfire.

Ten days is not enough. A lifetime is not enough.



The Meadows

Peter Goff

As everyone who has been to the Alps knows, one of the highlights of the visit is the vast areas of unspoilt and unimproved ancient countryside making up the Alpine Meadows; Ailefroide and its surrounding environs being no exception.

One of the finest of these meadows was just a 20 minute walk from the campsite in the valley bottom. This was a very damp area and the sheer number of wild flowers had to be seen to be believed.

We took a walk up to the Glacier Blanc and Mick was astonished to see how far the glacier had retreated, having been there 2 years previously.

The whole fellside was a riot of colour; lower down there was a number of Orchids, then Asphodel and Fire Lilies, Glacial Pinks, Yellow Mountain Saxifrage and countless others.

The flora stopped abruptly some 400 yards from what was left of the glacier's snout. However, the more advanced flora was busily trying to colonise the bare glacial fill and the very acidic gravels. Among these was perhaps the prettiest wild flower we saw: Alpine Toadflax, which grows up to 4,000 metres.

There were also some shrubs advancing up the hill. Dwarf Willow was the most advanced, then Sallows and, just below, colonial thickets of Aspen, plus the flowering shrub Alpenrose.



One of the difficulties in identifying wild flowers here is that, although a large number are the same genera as in England, the species are different. It's all very complicated.

One wild flower that puzzled everyone wasn't identified until we got back to England. This turned out to be the Great Yellow Gentian, growing between 3 and 4 feet tall with yellow flowers arranged around the stem every 6 inches or so, looking like a candelabra; very elegant.

There is no doubt that the walking and climbing in Ailefroide was made even more attractive by the flora encountered on the way.

The Spirit of '34

A Car-Free Weekend at High House

3-5th July 2009

The idea was greeted with enthusiasm by many members and there was much pub-talk in the preceding months about how each individual was going to travel to the hut without a car. The big question, though, was whether this enthusiasm would evaporate when the reality of transporting not only one's self but bedding, clothes, and food for the weekend was confronted. For the hardy pioneers of the thirties the choice was simple; if you wanted to spend the weekend at High House you put everything you needed on your back and set off. Would our weak-fleshed members of today really be up to the challenge? Would there be a car or two parked up there, with red-faced owners practising their excuses inside? Would High House stand empty, perhaps, the rain streaming down its dark windows? Well, some of us held onto our resolve and what a fine weekend we had!

For the record here's the list of who and how:

John and Caroline Walsh took two days to walk from Kendal, stopping overnight in Elterwater.

Robert Walsh cycled cross-country and over the fells from Kendal. Mark Walsh and Sarah Jennings walked over (with all the gear for a days climbing!) from Thirlmere.

Sarah's husband, Colin, and their children Matthew and Emma came by bus and on foot.

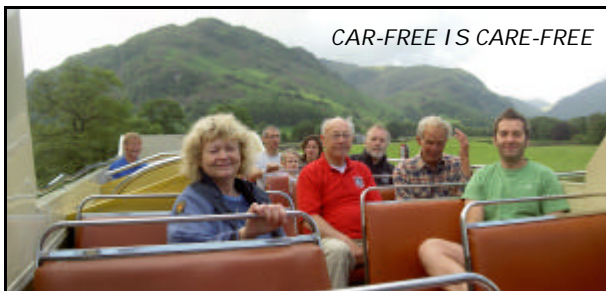
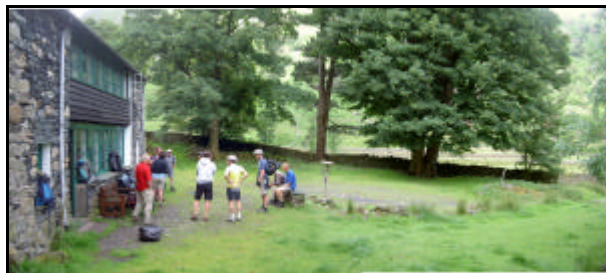
Cheryl Smallwood and Richard Mercer cycled by road and tea-shop from Kendal.

Gordon Pitt proved that it doesn't need to be too demanding, travelling by bus-pass from Kendal to Seatoller, only a stroll away.

The biggest team comprised: Roger Atkinson, Peter Goff, Bill Hogarth, Alec Reynolds, Jason Smallwood, Joseph Smallwood, George Smallwood, Clare Fox, Mick Fox. They travelled by bus from Kendal to the Old Dungeon Ghyll and walked via Stake Pass and Langstrath, visiting the valley's 'secret' cave (Joe Smallwood exiting the cave top right) en route. A meal at the Scafell Hotel sustained them on their journey.

How beautiful High House looks without a mess of cars in front of it! Everyone agreed that it's not too much of a trial getting there and that we **MUST DO IT AGAIN NEXT YEAR.**

Some tough guys returned on foot and on two wheels but for a few of us, the bus gave us a pleasant and exciting (through Borrowdale at high speed) ride home.



Middlebarrow Evening Walk

8th July 2009

Another good turn-out for another excellent local evening walk from Peter Goff.

It began with a circuit of the interior of the gigantic Middlebarrow quarry, whose cliffs, from a distance, look like a pioneer rock-climber's dream. Alas, the rock is shattered and will never be climbed until the trees planted on the quarry floor have grown to mature oaks (that's never because they're birches).

The route took us past the assertive but equally crumbling Arnside tower, up to the sunlit pepperpot (left) on top of King William's Hill, then down through the Beech Circle to our starting point in Eaves Wood.

We finished in the quirky but brilliant 'Woodlands', a secretive pub on the outskirts of Silverdale. Give it a try but do the walk first!

Thank you Peter for opening up more horizons.



A Dog's Day Out

19th July 2009

David Birkett

Billed simply as a 'walk on the fells' belied this magnificent walk from Stanah via Sticks Pass and over the ridges to Helvellyn finishing down Tongue Gill - one of the finest walks in the Lake District. 09.35 Kendal bus station, we thought only a quartet had arrived for the long walk, as the bus emerged a further three joined us and the 'silver riders' were off. At Tongue Gill, Grasmere the bus stopped, the Walshs, Hughie and three dogs joined the already full bus to swell the ranks to ten plus three canines. Stanah lies in the southern entrance to St. John's in the Vale close by the majestic Castle Rock, playground of our youth. Des Oliver, a former Ranger, lives at the foot of Sticks Pass, I called but he was out. The party set off briskly but were soon checked by the steepening path

which was now grassing over partially due to the closure of the Legburthwaite Youth Hostel. The weather forecast was reasonably encouraging 'mainly dry with a possibility of increasing (heavy) showers p. m.' our experience was delightful with distant views all-round. Roger Atkinson was our leader with the Hunters, Mary, Frank, Mike and myself completing the convivial group - Mary had warned us of her

slow but steady pace, the rest forged ahead towards Sticks Pass, the highest pass in the Lake District and the 'yellow brick road' which is the 'fix the fells' contribution to the landscape. Sticks Pass is an ancient route used by the Greenside miners to transport ore on ponies to the smelter at Keswick. On the east side of the pass was Sticks Tarn which was enlarged to form 'top dam' in the heavily industrialised Patterdale complex,

The numbers of walkers swelled considerably, for a mountain challenge was taking place, four mountain bikers drove by, just a normal Sunday in the Helvellyn range. On Raise a stop was made for butties, 'where's Mary' some one said 'ahead of course' and so she was, we met her on Whiteside, so much for slow and steady. Off went the hares, it is always a toil on to Lower man from Brown Cove Col, four mountain bikers waited at the top of the ridge before their hairy descent. 'Fix the fells' had been at work towards Swirral Edge, trying to define a route on the plateau, sadly this was unnatural and not up to scratch. Footpath work was a re-occurring theme throughout the walk with the recent work on Striding Edge - a walled platform

has been built after the last rock gendarme - coming in for criticism. The crossed-walled shelter was full on Helvellyn summit (950m) - formerly known as Lauvellin in the 1600s - so we headed for Nethermost Pike, keeping close to the escarpment and viewing the magnificent coves to the East. Below High Crag is the idyllic Hard Tarn in Ruthwaite Cove, a glaciated rockshelf tarn only 2.5' deep. The whole escarpment is an SSSI with many alpine plants clinging to the ledges and emerging from the rock fissures. Dollywaggon Pike was our next stop 'not more butties' John Walsh exclaimed. 'Where was Mary' came another cry - 'ahead of course' - we met on the lower path descending towards Grisedale Tarn. Complete again the party followed the 'fix the fells' pitched path towards the tarn, this was met with

more approval, though the work was still in progress. Grisedale Tarn lies at the 1800' contour and is 115' deep. I find it a dark and sombre place, geologists say it was formed by a glacier flowing eastwards from the Scafells and forming the largest glacial valley in the Lake District. The others in order of size were Eskdale, Langstrath, Kentmere, Mardale, Seathwaite, Wasdale and Rydale Head



(Heaton Cooper) Grisedale derives from the ON -Grisedalr - the swine valley.

The last climb of the day was up the slope to Grisedale Hause, between Seat Sandal and Fairfield, the dogs swam in the tarn and nearby dub, they had thoroughly enjoyed themselves, running twice the distance we had walked; they had tried to trip us up, slavered and wiped themselves on us, eat our butties, they had snapped and yapped, had playful fights and chased birds - it was a real dogs life and a dogs day out. The final descent to the Traveller's Rest was via Hause Riggs and Little Tongue, the terrain caused weariness but we could smell the beer so our pace quickened. At Mill Bridge we gathered and sauntered to the ale house - Jennings best was the tipple, 'where's Mary' the cry went up - 'in the pub of course!' As we trundled down the A591, stopping and starting with the traffic, I looked back on a most interesting and fulfilling walk - we were all dog tired.

On the bus a fragrant Italian overcame the occupants and was too much for the Fellfarers.

"John Peat's Next Walk"

Humphrey Head 21st July 2009

Roger Atkinson

The optimists in the Fellfarers left home in a thunderstorm to meet John at the Guide over the Sands. Our faith was well rewarded and we left the pub in sunshine and went via field paths, made very wet by the showery day, to emerge on to Humphrey Head at the Outdoor Pursuits Centre in brilliant evening light. As we traversed the length of the headland, with extensive views in all directions, we congratulated ourselves on ignoring the earlier rain. On reaching Humphrey Head Point we turned north through the picturesque wood on the east side of the promontory stopping only to pass the time of day with a team of volunteers doing an evening maintenance shift for the Nature Conservancy. John had chosen an alternative return route and as we took our first steps on it the thunder returned. Waterproofs were on in a second and we made haste to the pub, only fifteen minutes away, but by the time we reached Al-lithwaite there was a foot of water in the street, and we had lost our previous smug grins. Thanks go to John, and the three other Fellfarers, for a enjoyable and memorable evening, even the weather's sting in the tail gained us a reputation in the pub. (I'll leave you to guess as what!!)

Fellrace Weekend

1st August 2009

Alec Reynolds

This year's fellrace weekend was memorable for many reasons, primarily because High House was full to overflowing with a large jolly party who had a great time. The days after the race were filled with a variety of activities best shown courtesy of Dean Jackson's photographs...

Below left: Kevin in command

Bottom left: Philip bouldering about

Below right: Dean and Ashley on Derwentwater

Bottom right: Dean getting serious

Continued over





Fellrace weekend continued:

While we were playing on the rock a group of lads were attempting to scramble Sour Milk Gill. They got as far as the big waterfall before one fell ten metres and smashed a kneecap. We had a grandstand view of the local paramedics, the Keswick MRT and the Northwest Air Ambulance (left).

Right: Grandad explaining how easy he found it.

Oh, the fellrace! That was won by Rob Jebb in a time of 2:51:54.

During the fell race on the Great Gable Checkpoint, all was going well with Bill Hogarth being the number shouter, Clare Fox was the number recorder, Peter Blamire was the time keeper, and Mike Walford verifying numbers and catching strays. But after a while Peter decided to have a go at shouting out the numbers, and the number recorder was heard to say to Peter, "Stop shouting in Scottish".

Silverdale Moss and Coldwell Parrock

11th August 2009



In a week, like so many this summer, of mixed weather, it was touch-and-go for a dry evening. Nevertheless, fourteen of us ignored the gloomy sky and gathered in the little car-park at Gait Barrows National Nature Reserve. We waited for ten minutes for last-minute stragglers and then stormed off into the undergrowth.

I've no idea where we went to begin with. Probably eastwards and then in a clockwise circuit of the Reserve. As always on Peter's walks, it was the trees and flowers that held the attention, not the navigation. He knew where we were; that's all that mattered.

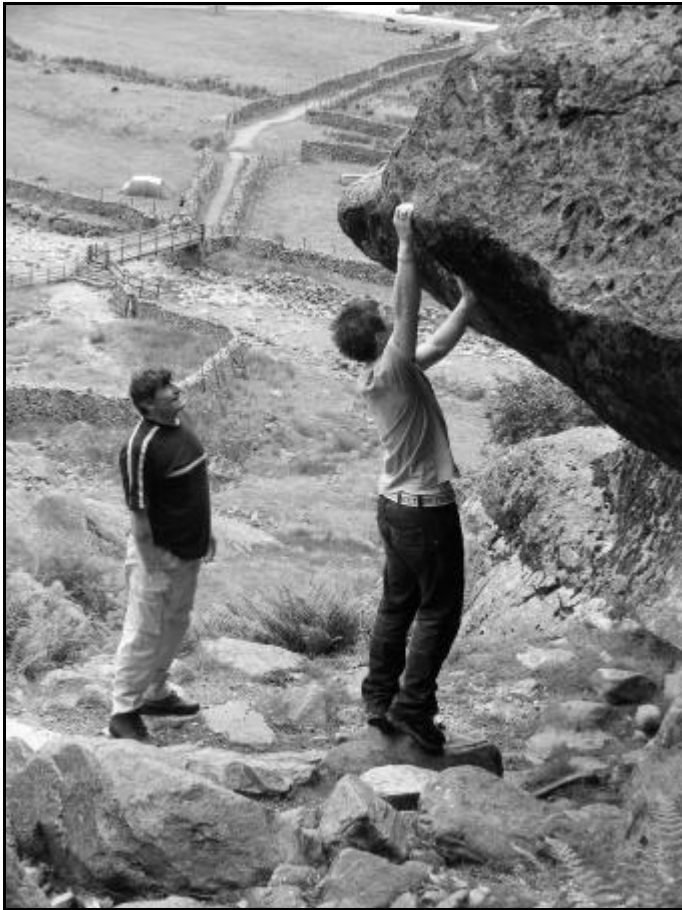
We emerged eventually, picking twigs from our hair and brushing the leaves off, on the Waterslack road and immediately plunged back into the greenery of Silverdale Moss. It's a mass of straight blue lines on the map but we stayed dry-shod, crossing from Old Lancashire to Old Westmorland on the little slate bridge over Leighton Beck.

We arrived on tarmac again, this time on the Arnside road, close to another county boundary bridge: the intriguingly named Creep-i'-the-call Bridge. (*Googling the name only tells me that Creep-I -the-call Wood is number 71 on SLDC's list of county wildlife sites, which isn't very informative. Does anyone have the story of the bridge's name? Ed*)

The penultimate leg of our evening stroll took us through Coldwell Parrock (which Peter tells us means Paddock) to view the ruinous limekiln and the prominent limestone boulders. They have the form of erratics but, being limestone on limestone, they raised the question for Peter: do the boulder and underlying rock have to be different for the boulder to be an erratic or does the boulder simply have to be transported from its original site by glacial action for the term to apply? (*I'm not Googling again; can any geologist give us a definitive explanation of what the term means? Ed*).

We arrived back at Gait Barrows and Peter announced that the finale to the evening would be a couple of pints in his local, The New Inn at Yealand.

An excellent choice to round off a fine evening.



Walters Worst and Wettest Walk

5 September 2009

It was a typical summer 2009 day in the Lakes: The clag was down to head-height and a chilly wind was driving the rain into the back of the car as we hopped about getting into waterproofs. Never mind; eight stalwarts turned up. Eight not-so-stalwarts agreed to a low-level alternative to the planned walk over Dow Crag. We turned off the Walna Scar Road just after Boo Tarn and headed down to the dramatic hole of Banishead Quarry. Walter had a good story to tell about the flooding of the workings. You must ask him to tell it to you sometime. A lively Torver Beck prevented a direct crossing and we were forced to walk down through the spoilheaps to the Tranearth footbridge. A boggy traverse across to Ash Gill Beck, led by Walter vainly searching for a path, ended in the semi-shelter of an old quarry working there. The impending wall of dark slate kept wind and rain off us while we ate a very early lunch, finished off with a pudding of Krysia's excellent liquorice toffees.

We wandered back, exploring more workings for a sight of a rare fern that David B. particularly wanted to find, but didn't. We had forgotten about the problem of crossing Torver Beck until we arrived once more on its banks. A long trudge upstream failed to find any crossing point for us all until we arrived at Cove Bridge and the Walna Scar Road. The sky brightened, too late, as we peeled off our waterproofs and planned which pub(s) would receive our custom.

The 2009 A.T.T. TRIALS

Health and Safety Warning: All-Terrain Tobogganing is a dangerous activity. Full body-armour is recommended.

The All Terrain Toboggan Trials will be held on 31st December 2009. *Yehaaaaaa!*

The vehicle :

- # Must be home-made. Each constructor is honour-bound to spend no more than £10 per year on research, development, acquisition, construction and testing of the vehicle, including salaries, insurance, bribes and taxes.
- # Must be self-propelled. Any help from friends, family, passing strangers, pets, sheep or other animate beings during the course of any of the trials will result in instant disqualification. This may be a desirable outcome for some competitors.
- # Must be complete at the start, finish and all intermediate stages of the trials. Repairs, tuning and minor tinkering between trials may be allowed at the judge's discretion but don't push your luck.
- # Should be able to run on snow, grass, rough track, tarmac, water and any other elements which present themselves.



The Secretary at the secret speed-trials of her ground-breaking ATToboggan on the salt-flats, Keld, Yorkshire, 9th August 2009

Categories are :-

1. The Classic Downhill Race - on snow or grass, in the field next to High House.
2. The Time Trial - fastest time down the High House track to the gate. (*The record stands at 25.7 seconds, achieved by 'Krazy Kev' Smith in 2008.*)
3. The Road Race - 100 yards on level tarmac beyond the farm yard.
4. The Wild Water Race - on, in, or under, a short section of the River Derwent.
5. Originality - special prize for novelty, inventiveness or absurdity of vehicle and/or costume.

All categories will judged by someone with a clipboard whose verdict will be final.

If this isn't enough information for you, call Jason or Cheryl on 01539 738451

October

The Committee will meet at 7.30 pm on **Tuesday 6th October** at The Rifleman's Arms. It will be a nostalgic meeting where we'll be asking if it's true that "Things are more like they are now than they ever were before." Come and join us for a pint.

Postponed from last November:

Friday

2nd October 2009

Nightwalk number 4

A Moonlit Walk on the Howgills



About 7 miles to the Calf and back, starting from Sedbergh main car park (Grid Ref SD 659 921) at approx 7 pm (leaving Kendal at 6.30 - call the Ed to share transport)

BRING A TORCH

Note that this walk is weather-dependent. If in doubt, call the Ed.

Wednesday 14th October 2009

75 Questions Quiz Night

The Strickland Arms

7.30 pm

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More Info: Jason Smallwood
01539 738451



SATURDAY
17th October 2009
Walk/Meal
A 7 Mile Stroll along The Turbary Road to look at the Caves and Limestone Pavements of Kingsdale.

Meet 10.30 am. at Grid Ref. SD 690 756 (North-west of Ingleton)



LIMITED PARKING SO PLEASE SHARE CARS
More info: Peter Goff

23-29th October 2009

High House

I s booked for **K Fellfarers**



But watch out! There's kids about - it's Half-Term

Still October - just ↓ November

Still October - just ↓

Saturday 31st October 2009

Halloween Party

A Bonfire Party at the Walshaw's Barn and Field (Grid Ref SD 427 853)

Witherslack

Quiet fireworks only

7 pm start

More info: ring Tony/Anne

015395 52491



6-7 November 2009

HIGH HOUSE

IS BOOKED FOR FELLFARERS TO TAKE PART IN

THE

REMEMBRANCE

SUNDAY

CEREMONIES



ON GREAT GABLE OR CASTLE CRAG

Tuesday
17 November 2009

The 1st Winter SLIDESHOW

Alec + Krysia's Trip South Part 1: AUSTRALIA



Strickland Arms

7.30 pm

Buffet provided

Saturday
28 November 2009

KENDAL TOWN HALL

One last party for our 75th Birthday!

This one is to celebrate our Kendal/K Shoes roots.



Full details are on the Club News Page (page 3)

The Committee will meet at 7.30 pm on **Tuesday 3rd November** at The Rifleman's Arms. We'll be asking whether the Lottery is just a tax on people who are bad at maths. Come and join us for a pint.

December

The Committee will meet at 7.30 pm on **Tuesday 1st December** at the Rifleman's Arms. We'll be considering the idea that: "Time is what keeps everything from happening at once." Come and join us for a pint.

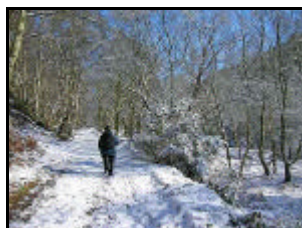
Tuesday
8th December 2009
SLIDESHOW
A Voyage to the Arctic Circle

by new members
Graham and Irene Ramsbottom



Kendal Golf
Club
7.30 pm
Buffet provided

Saturday
12th December 2009
Forest of Bowland
Walk
6.5 miles through Grizedale
and over Nicky Nook.
Approx 3-4 hours.
Meet 11 am
The Priory (café) Scorton
OS map OL41 GR 488 502,



Parking can be limited in
Scorton at the weekends so
please share cars
more info - Sarah Jennings -
01995 606755

24th December 2009
to
3rd January 2010
HIGH HOUSE
Is booked for
Fellfarers



**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
EVERYONE !**

Thursday
31st December 2009
A.T.T.TRIAL



Full moon tonight !

All the information you
need is on page 17
Here's a question though:
In this age of equality, why
have we, so far, had no
proper entries from the
ladies ?

*(I'm sure that the solitary female
entrant in 2007 will accept that
her piece of plywood on castors
did not constitute a competitive
entry ...but then neither did her
dad's last year)*

January 2010

The Committee will meet at 7.30 pm on **Tuesday 5th January** at the Rifleman's Arms. We'll be testing once more the theory that: "For every action there is an equal and opposite criticism." Come and join us for a pint.

8 - 9th January
2010

Glencoe Meet



The Clachaig Chalets

10 beds - 2 nights
Approx. £35 per person
Payable to the
Treasurer in advance.
(Address on back page)
Bookings are not
guaranteed until the fee
has been paid.
(but you will get a full
refund if you can't make it
and we fill the place)

16th January
2010
Charlie's Walk



Meet @ Helsington Church
GR SD 488 889
12 noon

15-16th January
2010

High House

is booked for the club
Including

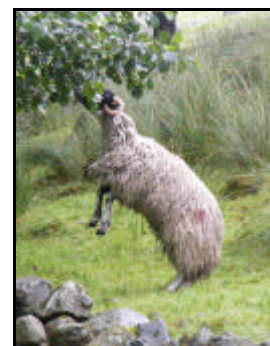
A Winter Walk

Route to be agreed by
those present on Friday.
Followed, possibly, by a
bar-meal and a bus-ride
back to the hut.



Mark on last year's walk

Tuesday
19th January 2010
SLIDESHOW
**The Fellfarers' Year
2009**



The Strickland Arms
7.30 pm

Guests are welcome
Buffet provided

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY: FRIDAY 29th JANUARY 2010 - THE NEXT A.G.M. MORE DETAILS IN NEXT NEWSLETTER

CLUB OFFICIALS**PRESIDENT: Gordon Pitt** Tel: 015395 68210

TRUSTEES **Mick Fox** Tel: 01539 727531
Alec Reynolds Tel: 01229 821099
Cheryl Smallwood Tel: 01539 738451
Vicky Weeks Tel: 07971 408375

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Tony Walshaw Tel: 015395 52491

Club Archivist: Fred Underhill Tel: 01539 727480**Other Information****Seathwaite Farm (Emergencies only)** Tel: 017687 77284**OUR CLUB**

K Fellfarers Club Website: www.kfellfarers.co.uk
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