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## LMC Newsletter January 2008

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### Editorial

Happy New Year!  
I hope everyone will try to attend at least one meet this year.

Your card should be arriving shortly if you paid your subscription. If not it will arrive when you have paid! Meanwhile, the first Meet of the year is Brian's at Blea Tarn on the 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> January. Tel 01772 431818.

Thanks to all the contributors to this Newsletter – I have been overwhelmed!

Jim Cunningham - Editor

## Scotland – The Caravan – Tyndrum

7 – 9<sup>th</sup> September

Edgar Davies

A jolly weekend meet enjoyed by the happy harmonious half-dozen Ian & Pat Aitcheson, Mick Mulligan & Gordon Grant, Dave Lomas & Edgar Davies. On arrival at 7.30pm Friday Edgar got his key out to open the door only to find Ian & Pat already ensconced – they having travelled over, I'm given to believe, from somewhere around the Cairngorms. An hour later Mick & Gordon arrived, and after a modicum of bartering for optimum bed-spaces, migrated to Paddy's Bar.

After a clear starlit night all were hoping for a fine day to come – well, it didn't rain (not quite) but was cloudy & overcast all day. Ian & Pat begged for sick-leave through injury to the limbs (though I've forgotten which one!) and planned to take a gentler lowland walk. Gordon & Mick had ambitions on another Munroe, this one Ben Oss – the trouble was, as Edgar told them, it's not worth doing Oss without the big brother Ben Lui; Mick agreed, and that's what they did.

Edgar & Dave L meanwhile drove up the glen & over Rannoch Moor to park at Altnafeadh near the Lagangarbh, to ascend Stob Dearg & traverse the complete Buachaille Etive Mor ridge. Starting up the Coire na Tulaich corrie on the north side we were in the cloud before reaching the first bealach, and from thereon relied on map & compass to steadily ascend SE, then E and finally NE to the east summit at 3,345ft. Returning to the bealach we met up with Les, a lone walker

steadily ticking off his Munroes – Stob Dearg was his number 115, so we invited him to join us along the ridge to complete his 116<sup>th</sup>. As a threesome, we proceeded up the stony ascent to the main central peak at 1,011m. Still in cloud, it was around here that we veered off-route: in his role as map-reader, Dave guided us slightly W of S; Edgar with his compass read our course as SSW – seemed all right at the time, but after 20mins descending an open gully with diminishing evidence of footpath you start to wonder! And then, for a split second, the cloud cleared, and we could see exactly where we were - - - and where we should be. In fact we needed to traverse the mountainside somewhat to the west to rejoin the ridge: continued descent would have dropped us into the head of Glen Etive. Nearing the ridge, Dave heard more voices behind us, as another group strayed off-course as we'd done, so he returned to 'rescue' them – a Polish team, as it turned out. Once on the ridge, the walk was resumed to the Munroe at the SW end, and Dave got out his wee bottle of whisky for us all to have a nip – only Les doesn't drink whisky, so some of us got a little bit more!

Les too was staying in Tyndrum, so we agreed to meet up in Paddy's Bar to celebrate. We walked in to see Mick & Gordon already propping up the bar, they too having accomplished their goals for the day. So Edgar declared that whenever Les thinks of his 116<sup>th</sup> Munroe, he'll remember us and his meeting members of the LMC, that whenever his raffle ticket is number 116, he'll think of us – and we're already invited to his 116<sup>th</sup> birthday party!

Sunday morning was not so bright, indeed there was drizzle in the air – not the conditions to arouse inspiration. Ian & Pat were first to leave, shortly followed by Mick & Gordon, all having helped with clean-up. Edgar & Dave left on the dot of noon leaving the caravan clean & tidy.

## Buttermere Meet Sept 21<sup>st</sup> – 23rd

Will Wheale

Despite a bad forecast for the Friday and Sunday, the meet was well attended by members from across the country. The weekend activities included walking, climbing, drinking and for a certain individual Shopping!

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Apart from some bad weather, everyone seemed to have a good time.

But, the meet will be remembered most for the Meet Leader's bad luck and misfortune. Having picked up the every-green Mr Toon senior, the meet leader set off on his jolly way to Buttermere at a steady pace, unfortunately at a too steady pace for the Cumbria Constabulary who promptly took a picture of him as he travelled through the Kentmere bypass. Whoops said the half awake Toon as he power napped after another gruelling day at the office "Did they get you" "certainly did" "Most unfortunate! Hope you remembered to smile!"

Never mind, the show must go on, so foot down and back on course to Buttermere. Arriving at Sykes farm in good time, good time being before the pub closes of course! After another heavy downpour it was essential that a good, high dry pitch was obtained for the tent, in preparation for any flash flooding! Having sourced a great spot under the guidance and expertise of Mr Toon senior ( A Very Very Very Experienced Camper!), the meet leader began erecting his super high tech, all season, all weather tent, that would withstand the ultimate rain storm, only to snap a pole! Never mind, the meet leader, being an ex-scout had a repair kit in his tent peg bag, "always be prepared", never leaves you! But, where's the tent peg bag, it's not in the tent bag, its not in the car, it's in the loft at home! Do we bivvi? Do we lodge with other residents! Do we just go home! We go to the pub and make an executive decision under the influence of some dam fine beer! So, a bivvi in the car was chosen, Mr Toon senior as excited as ever, loves an epic! Never happier!

Well, Saturday came, the weather is fine, climbing to be done, so off we set on our merry way to High Crag to ascend some classic rock. But its damp, no it's running! No one fancied putting the rope up! Not today gents! I'm off to Grey Crag, bit drier higher up boys. So off, we went following the very very very experienced climber Mr Toon Senior, who's armed with his rock fax topopo of new routes recently put up on Grey Crag! As enthusiastic as ever, racing to the crag!

Having arrived at the crag, straws were drawn, the new routes selected for the two climbing parties, Wheale and Toon to attempt Harrow Rib (HS 4a) on Harrow Buttress, Tranquillity on Chockstone Buttress (E1 5b/5a) and Dexter Wall ( VS 4c) on Oxford and Cambridge Buttress. With the formidable climbing duo, Bond and Atkins to attempt Harrow Buttress ( D), Slabs Route West (HS 4a) on Chockstone Buttress and a second ascent of Tranquillity on Chockstone Buttress (E1 5b/5a).

Having located the lines, the climbers made slow progress in difficult conditions - nothing quite grips the concentration like a simple 4a pitch, when its wet, slippery and covered in moss. It changes the whole grading system, men become mice, legs shake, nerves tingle and hearts flutter!

Success, all routes fell in cold, wet, windy conditions, but as a write I still couldn't tell you which pitches, of which routes we did, as navigation was hard, but we had an adventurous day out, a fun time, in a great location and that, people, is what traditional climbing is all about! No bolts or bouldering mats required - just steady nerves and good technique!

The meet also included three walking parties although I am not quite sure where they went but I am assured they had a good time. The reason I don't know this information is due to heavy rain on the Saturday night, tents collapsed and walkers fled in the early hours! Hopefully, the parties concerned are alive and well. I will refrain from naming and shaming these cowards, but I will be at the annual dinner and can be easily bribed to keep quiet or talk!

But one individual who I will name and shame is Michelle Beech, the sole instigator of the deadly disease that has currently brought Lundy Island to a standstill. Having spread the illness far and wide, it was time to infect Keswick, disguising the operation as a shopping trip! Yes, the club has a very active shopping section. No experience is required, just a healthy Visa card and lots of enthusiasm. Michelle will then provide the appropriate training to max your account! Apparently, the bus ride was very pleasant and lots of bargains to be bought! That included some tent pegs for the Meet Leader, very kind!

Sunday - well the rains came, and they still came, and as I write they are still coming, so when summer arrives and the sun re-appears, we'll go to Buttermere again and camp once more! Only next year, I'll take my tent pegs and avoid police cameras!

## Gogarth Meet

**Steve Lyon**

Thanks to all and sundry who attended the Gogarth Meet and made it into such an enjoyable weekend. We had twelve members and one very junior member (baby Nia) turning up at The South Stack car park on Saturday morning to establish an age spread record for this meet, from under one, to two active climbing sexagenarians.

Sadly intermittent drizzle and low cloud drifting over the cliff tops called for an alternative plan. A trip to the Castle Bakery and Coffee shop developed some alternatives; sightseeing, headland walks to photograph obscure places in the mist, and completing a few routes between showers at Rhoscolyn.

Sunday made it into a weekend of two halves as they say. The faithful were about to be rewarded. Brilliant autumnal sunshine saw teams climbing on Yellow and Red Walls and on Wen Slab in pretty much ideal conditions.

Ascents were made of Savage, Anarchist, The Moon, Wendigo, Dream of White Horses and Concrete Chimney. Simply superb.

Unfortunately we didn't have tickets for the Oyster Festival at The Trearddur Bay Hotel on Saturday night. I am working on this for next year. Bring your dinner jacket!

## Mountain Biking, Melrose, Scotland

October, 2007

Clare Smith

Well, first of all the weather was fantastic and it would have been a crime not to have taken advantage of it. Everyone arrived safely on Friday night and took to their beds (by 11.30 sharp as she who must be obeyed on the desk of the hostel was not to be trifled with!!).

Saturday morning came and it was time to get up (unfortunately....I don't do mornings) but a great day was planned and the group went their separate ways in true LMC style (joking) and a sub party headed off to Glentress for some serious mountain biking! I was informed that we were going to complete the black route and believe me, by the end of the day I was well aware of the fact. A small sub-sub party, including myself, Iain Mc, Dave Toon, John Harold and Martin (Dave's friend!), headed off for the hills and no amount of pork pies was to sustain me I can assure you. However, we had a fantastic day including full face plants and punctures. Completely exhausted we headed back for a wonderful meal in Melrose.

Sunday. Well, I had thought an easy day would have been the thing. Apparently not. Off to Innerleithen for another battle with the bike. Minus legs today as mine were in no fit state. The lads did well though and we did

manage another great day out and only one sense of humour failure from myself! I have to say though, mountain biking is hard!

Thanks to Kev Massey for organising a fantastic weekend.

Note from Jim Cunningham:

I add this on behalf of the "more mature" groups for whom "black runs" are only to be completed on ski. I am sure this is absolutely impossible in the Scottish forests in October.

Graham, Bob and myself set off to gently explore the sunny banks of the River Tweed. However, the path gradually deteriorated and we ended up carrying bikes (a black path?). However, we emerged unscathed after about six kilometers and completed a pleasant run to Kelso, with its abbey, castle and river. We then followed the River Teviot on the return route, on a mostly excellent path with beautiful scenery. We were scared off at one point by a group of horses galloping wildly back and forth and trying to kick each other. The obvious route back (from the map) was a roman road, heading straight back to Melrose. However, it was not so obviously a good idea when we attempted to ride it. There were about ten stiles and while straight, it went up and down over every bump, with thick grass under foot (we were walking). We arrived back as the sun set after a spectacular day out. I only took about 150 photos though – a bit disappointing. On the roman road we passed a grave (dated 1544), with the following inscription:

Fair Maiden Lilliard lies under this stane  
Little was her stature but muckle her fame  
Upon the English loons she made manie thumps  
And when her legs were cutit off she fought on her stumps.

When repairs were carried out in 1885 the following was added: By me its been mendit  
To your care I commend it

Thanks again to Kev for organizing the Meet.

## Cragging in France - the Ariege valley

Dave Sudell

Autumn half term and a need to escape the rain and damp of merry England?

How about a visit to the crags of Bedheilac, Auzat, and Sinsat in the Ariege valley south of Toulouse in France. The crags have an extensive range of grades, there are

even some easy ones, the weather is usually guaranteed fine in April, May, June, September and October, and its worth the risk even in winter. The main town is Foix with nice cafes and restaurants, pavement cafes still thriving at the end of October. We stayed at le Coupier in a very good B&B which also has bunkhouse accommodation available ([www.climbariege.com](http://www.climbariege.com)). A twenty to thirty minute drive each morning to the super crags where the walk-ins varied from five to twenty minutes. We flew Jet2 Manchester - Toulouse, Ryan Air also fly Liverpool - Carcassonne. The drive from the airports to Foix is on good roads and takes just over an hour. An excellent week and certainly worth another visit.

As some of you will be aware, long standing LMC members Jim and Joan Lawson have upped the tent pegs and moved to rural France. They are renovating a lovely house at Beaumarches near Plaisance (which sounds nice and is) just north of Tarbes. The views of the distant Pyrenees from their terrace are idyllic and with the gentle mooing of cattle in their fields forms a lovely backdrop to the swishing of the G&T's. We visited them for a couple of days and are able to report they are well and that their command of the new language seems to be coming along very well indeed. Good neighbours are helping with tractors and local produce, along with the all too frequent and necessary telephone calls to distant administrators. Their email address is [lawson.james@club-internet.fr](mailto:lawson.james@club-internet.fr) and I'm sure they will be glad to hear from any old friends.

## Going Potty - or how wrong can you be?

**Dave Sudell**

For once we had arrived early at Bernie's cafe and were sitting waiting for the arrival of Richard who had arranged the hire of all the gear. In walked an elderly looking gentleman, my immediate thoughts were that it being remembrance Sunday, this chap has probably called in for a cup of tea on his way to the village gathering. He sits on the end of our table and seems very polite. Jim Cunningham turns up and the gentleman's eyes light up, maybe they were in the trenches together? 'Hi Jim good to see you', he says, eyes positively sparkling. 'We've been doing a bit of digging down by the old swimming baths, we're three weeks in now and I've managed to divert the stream by installing a hundred yards of four inch pipe, reckon we're onto a new passage!' The chap turns out to be an ex Happy Wanderer (demon digger) pal of Jim's and a retired leader of the local rescue team!

Fast forward five hours and we are exiting from Calf Pot having gone through it to Browgill Cave and back again. A nice pot with a lovely entrance via abseil, a walk under water (err ..... a waterfall actually) some nice passages and a rather tight squeeze and a wiggle through a passage (just keep thinking Kate Humble folks!). Out into the late afternoon sun where its perishingly cold, a quick change and down to the Crown in Houghton for a swift drink before tea at the Marton Arms.

Another excellent day's potholing, LMC style. As ever, special thanks to Stuart, Alf and Ken of Earby PHC who were our guides and advisors. Not forgetting the fifteen LMC members who turned out and of course to Richard for organising it. Tip of the day, The suit and knee pads I hired from Bernie's were worth their weight in ..... limestone, excellent.

## Lakes Meet, Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2007

**Richard Toon**

Just five hardy souls turned up for Jason's meet. This did not include Jason!

Richard Ramsden came over from Halifax; Will Wheale provided the Club bus; Andy Bond represented the Club oligarchs; Clare Cook would have provided home-made mince pies - but only brought one; and I was the Jason stand-in.

We aimed for Helvellyn from the Thirlmere side. Just a boring walk uphill unless you read the scrambles guide. There are three gems on the way; an easy start up a Grade 1 - Whiteside Gill. This was mainly walking up beside the stream, although there is a waterfall that might be climbed around on a better day. Then across the hillside to Brown Cove Crags, where we took the Grade 2. Nice and greasy but quite airy, reaching the shoulder and the upper part of the path. Then a snow plod to the summit, the mist and the sandwiches. The third scramble would have meant descending back into the corrie but the ridge at Grade 3 would be a touch difficult without ropes and the other paraphernalia, as it was partly snow covered and surely slippery all the way. So that's one on the list for a summer evening.

A touch of rain caught us on the way down the rather long tedious manufactured path but at least it was easy to navigate. Back to warm clothes and home in the daylight!!

A jolly day!!