



Fairhead Climbers

i. **Editorial. (Last Date for May edition 25/04/11)**

With the end of April bringing so many holidays due to Easter being late and the Royal Wedding, there will be plenty of opportunity to get out there and enjoy the hills. I am leading a meet to Tan yr Wyddfa and we have the First Aid and Rescue course, which is now full, at Heathy Lea, Easter will be in the Verdon. In May, Roger Gibbs is taking those of us that can get away, to Northern Ireland. Fairhead is an impressive crag, worth a visit.

Tan yr Wyddfa Sat 2nd Sun 3rd April.

John Green.

I shall be going up to our Welsh Hut on the Friday morning, so anyone without a key will be able to get in. Please come along and support us. I shall probably be doing a mountain walk if the conditions are Ok and will probably look at catching the bus into Beddgelert at 09.06 arriving at 09.15 then traversing the Moel Hebog ridge back to the hut. If there is interest I may drop into Cwm Pennant and find the original Oread Hut! Hope to see you on Friday 1st. (Yes, I know its April Fools Day) Contact on 01332 832101.

Easter in The Verdon -April 22nd-May 2nd 2011.

Simon Pape.

A small group of Oreads are heading out to the Verdon for Easter and the Royal Wedding. We're staying in St Laurent du Verdon. <http://www.provenceweb.fr/e/alaupro/stlauren/stlauren.htm>

If anyone wants to join us, they're welcome to do so, but will have to make their own arrangements. There's two campsites in the village as well as a few holiday rentals.

Simon.pape@eon.com 07813 616465/01629 822450

Rescue & First Aid Weekend

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th April 2011 at Heathy Lea - Pete Lancaster.

There were two occasions this summer in which Oreads were involved in incidents where someone had been injured and in one of these the injured party was an Oread. Would you know what to do if you were involved, or present, in an accident? If the person in trouble was your partner and he or she was on the end of a rope up a cliff or down a crevasse, could you escape the rope system and get them to safety and maybe administer first aid? Perhaps we owe it to our climbing partners to have these skills. This weekend is an opportunity to get those skills. It is being run by Rick Cotgreave who is an MIA qualified climbing instructor and a qualified first aid instructor and assessor: he has considerable teaching skill and experience. The cost will be divided by those attending to a maximum of 12 people, and should be £45 for the weekend course. First Aid on Saturday and Rescue on Sunday. Accommodation at Heathy Lea will be extra. As we are restricted to 12, could we ask that those wishing to come get in touch with Pete Lancaster as soon as possible to reserve a place.



March 1983 - Rescue Training

The outline of the weekend course is as follows:

Saturday

A First Aid course designed to provide a system for dealing with common emergency situations.

This will be a practical hands-on training day with a specific focus on providing first aid assistance in the outdoor environment.

The course will cover treatment for collapse, bleeding and injury and will explore the added complexities of first aid in remote areas.

The course includes a training manual and First Aid certificate, valid for 3 years.

Sunday

A Self-Rescue course designed for climbers.

To get the most out of this day it is recommended that participants have experience of multi-pitch climbing at a minimum grade of VS.

This will be a practical course looking to provide you with a tool-kit to prevent and cure some of the

common rescue scenarios that climbers may face whilst in the mountains or on sea cliffs.
The course will include a training manual to remind you of the techniques covered during the day.
Please bring your normal climbing kit (harness, belay device, helmet, rack for rigging belays)

01142 301136 or pete@54brooklands.freeserve.co.uk.

Cadair Idris - Fri 29th April to Mon 2nd May.

Reuben Dakin.



Cwmfry Arete -Cadair Idris –Sept 1990

Thanks to the royals, this unexpectedly makes May Day a 4 day weekend. Cadair Idris, inconveniently just under 3000 feet, doesn't get the attention it deserves, with its fine outline uninterrupted by satellite peaks, and the superb corrie of Cwm Cau. There are a good variety of approaches to the mountain via ridges and corries, and renowned climbing on dark Craig Cau and more open Cyfrwy. The wild Rhinogs, beautiful Mawddach estuary and town of Dolgellau are all nearby. We'll be staying at the quiet and remote campsite

at Hafod Dywyll, GR 685159, overlooking the mountain. The campsite has simple facilities of toilets and showers, and costs only £4 per person per night.

If you'd like to come, please let me know at least a week before the date. 01332 834543 / reuben@signet-solutions.com

Fairhead Sat 4th – Mon 6th June 2011

Roger Gibbs & Dave Mawer.

Fair Head is the greatest expanse of climbable rock in Britain or Ireland. It's massive, 100m high for much of its length and forms an impressive bulwark above its extensive boulder fields. It is a place of big skies, big walls and columns and has a compelling, somewhat gothic atmosphere. This is softened at either end as the rock sill tapers off into smaller cliffs and the western end, in particular has a friendlier sunnier aspect. If it was on the mainland it would be busy every weekend, instead you can have the whole place to yourself.

The cliff is formed from a sill of dolerite, which was cooled in columnar form to produce characteristic cracks and chimneys, similar to those of the Giants Causeway. The rock is smooth on the hands, offers great friction and is very sound.

The cliff stretches for three miles, sporting some 366 routes. These are the best that traditional climbing has to offer, straight lines, with striking cracks that shoot up all over the place, providing bomber protection, indeed the phrase "protection on demand," sums up Fair Head Climbing. It is the ultimate climbers' playground and the quantity of three star routes is testament to its brilliance. With short walk ins you can be on a route within ten minutes from leaving the car. Beautiful views stretch over Rathlin Island to the North and the Mull of Kintyre to the East, a spectacle to behold from the solitude of the belay.



Fairhead Cliffs and the Coast to the East

Here is a selection of routes from one weekend a few years ago to whet your appetite:

Midnight Cruiser. Apparently first done in the dark, you certainly wouldn't get lost, all the routes seem to follow superb lines.

Fireball. A little tougher but still giving excellent climbing on perfect rock with gear on demand. A superb jamming crack - get used to it!

The Brasser. Belfast slang for a lady of ill repute apparently. Superb jamming, perfect rock, a superb line, gear on demand. It even has a comfy belay! Both pitches are excellent, but the first one is the crux. Just do it!

Jolly Roger. Well it had to be done didn't it! A committing sequence up the thin crack on the first pitch which Squib led, and then steep and sustained on the (long) pitch two. The best route of its grade in the UK?

Blade Runner. We had to walk all of 20 yards to find another gob smacking line with brilliant climbing. A couple of stiff moves over the bulge on pitch 1 and some steep jamming on pitch 2. Brilliant again, but a little bit dirty in places and the odd bit of suspect rock. Three stars anywhere else but a mere two here!

Equinox. Steep jamming, bridging and laybacking on the first pitch to a cramped stance. Steep and intimidating moves over a small roof on the second. Another contender for the best route at its grade in the country. A bit like Cenotaph Corner but slightly harder, better and not polished.

Salango. Steep and sustained laybacking/jamming up a brilliant line. I know I'm being repetitive but they are stunning! The top pitch was the crux with proper jamming: both feet and both hands in the crack, a bit like being in the US – solid 5.10!

We had a chat to one of the local pioneers, who put up most of the routes we had done. He is still at it 40 years on! And the Guinness is superb! And the craic is mighty – if you manage to get out of the pubs before dawn it'll be a miracle. Please let me or Dave Mawer know if you want to come. Campsite details to follow.

For ferries it costs around £100 more for the holyhead to Dublin ferry which is effectively 3+3 hrs of driving from Derby to Fairhead vs. The Stranaer to Belfast ferry which is 5+1 hrs of driving.

Note from Chris Radcliffe; I noticed in Summit magazine that there is MCI meet at Fairhead from 3 – 5 June. Last year 150 people turned up at the equivalent meet, so it might be a bit crowded at the end of the week.

Let me or Rog know if your coming too. Roger Gibbs - roger@tilda.com - 07770 237270

Walk and Climb the Edges Meet – Sat 21st Sun 22nd May 2011

Gil Male

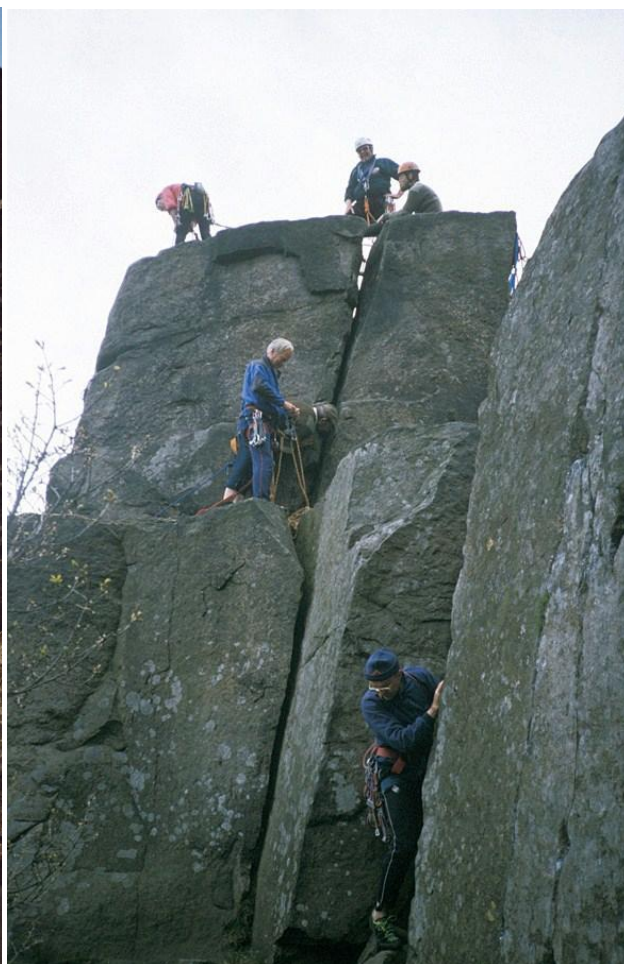
Gritstone, walking, climbing and pubs. Long time since the Oread had one of these meets. If you're not sure what I mean, the Gritstone Edges are those crags that industrial man tried to change into big wheels some time in the past? Sure glad they failed!

The idea of the meet is that we meet in pubs at lunchtime and evening and discuss, argue, embellish or witter about what we have been doing in the past 4 hours or so. This shouldn't be too demanding for the retired brigade, who are a bit short on memory at the best of times, and it should suit the younger brigade who can enthuse about tales of daring do. It's also ideally designed for those who never let the truth stand in the way of a good story. All you need to do is turn up at the pubs and be sociable, irritating, boring or all three at the same time. Personally I am up for it.

There's just one snag! For those of us with limited memory we need to do something in the previous 4 hours (i.e. morning and afternoon) to have something to talk about. To facilitate this process, I suggest we meet at the parking area on the A57 Sheffield – Glossop road just below Stanage far end (grid ref. SK 217874). The idea is then to walk in teams of two, or multiples thereof, over Stanage, Burbage North, Burbage South, Froggatt, Curbar, Gardoms and Birchens Edges before arriving at Heathy Lea. If you feel like a bit of exercise, as well, you can do a climb on each of the edges? Alternatively, you can join in at any point during the day as long as you make it to the pubs (i.e. Grouse Inn, above Froggatt and Robin Hood, above Heathy Lea) at the allotted times by your own route or means of transport (e.g. feet, bike, car, parachute or camel). I know what you're thinking. This is a meet to drag you from your firesides and you're not wrong!



Chequers Buttress



Giant's Staircase – Oread's 50th

If you want to know more then look at the sheet "Walk & Climb the Edges" in next months Newsletter. If you intend doing the edges walk/climb then please let me know by e-mail (gilemale@aol.com) indicating what nights you will be staying in Heathy Lea. This is important so arrangements can be made to get cars back from Stanage far end at the end of the day. If you want to join in at any point during the day the attached sheet gives approximate times when the meet will be at different points in order to ensure successful and timely arrival at the pubs. Look forward to seeing you. Gil Male

Retired, forgetful & up for it.

News, Articles and Reports from Meets.

Subscriptions for 2011

Thanks if you have paid. There are a small number outstanding according to my records, so if you think this may apply to you (or your spouse), please can you get in touch.

Thanks – Reuben Dakin 01332 834543 / reuben@signet-solutions.com

From Chris Radcliffe.

Some weeks ago I promoted the idea of a bulk purchase of CU glasses and I was able to put in an order for four pairs which did get us a modest discount.

Although there is a knack to using them, I have found them very good at reducing neck strain and making my belaying more effective.

I just want to let you know that the UK representative will be holding "Try Out" evenings at Alter Rock Derby on evening of Monday 4th April, and Nottingham Climbing Wall on evening of Thursday 7th April.

CU Belay Glasses are now online here www.cubelayglasses.co.uk making it easier for UK residents to 'try and buy'.

Does the grade matter?

Dave Mawer.

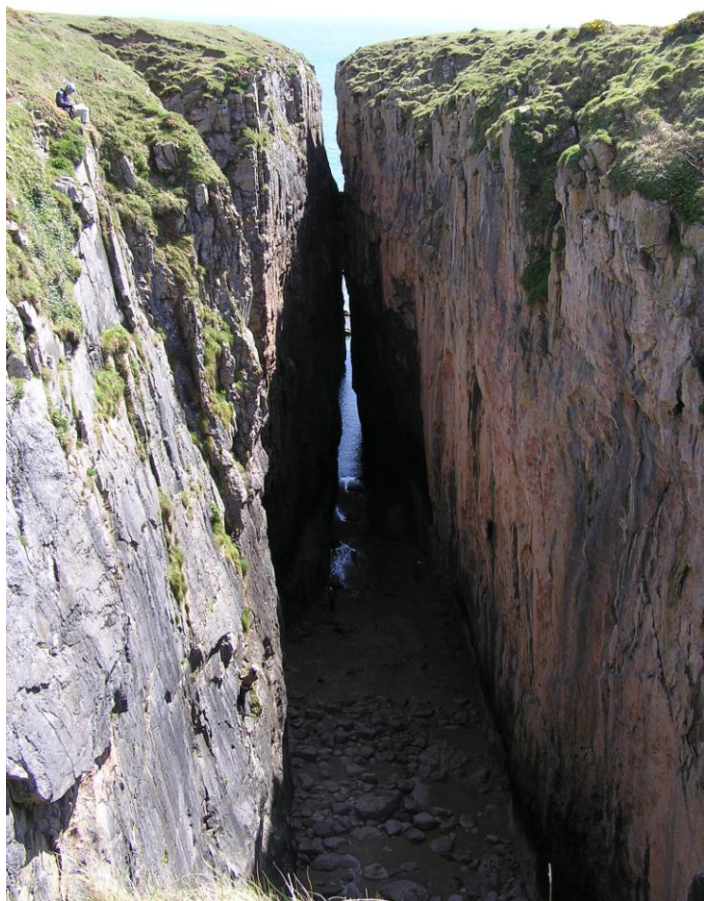
The words “we should have been here an hour ago” resounded in my head. My partner Graham busied himself constructing a hanging stance 20 ft above a boulder strewn beach as I kept vigil on the ever closer waves. I questioned myself about the reckless nature of our venture, knowing in 30 minutes we would be cut off from easy retreat by a chasing spring tide. What lay ahead were two pitches of climbing that would test our abilities to the limit. The alternatives an unthinkable abseil into the sea to take our chances amongst the boulders, a night in the zawn, or perhaps if we could attract their attention someone would come to our aid.

An hour ago I had patiently belayed Graham on a steep wall climb, and rudely awakened my arms extracting gear trying hard to rest where I could to avoid flash pump and ruin my own lead. Two hours earlier I had been happily playing on our “secret” beach with my son. Now my turn to climb I find it difficult to flick the switch and put all in. The perils of a climbing parent juggling aspirations and family life, nothing new I’m sure! After a shout of “safe” the ropes come tight as I lace up my rock boots, I scamper quickly leftward along easy flakes to join Graham at his belay. Disappointed by the number of cams used in his belay I persuade him to relinquish one for my lead rack, I probably won’t need it but who knows.

Now it’s down to me. I set off leftward along rising small edges and creaky flakes searching for gear, I find a nut slot and quickly place one clipping it to my rope before a side step and a long reach left gains a large flake and foot ledge. Here I stop for a breather before I sink a large cam and a nut up high extending them both on long slings. I cast a glance back to Graham and the beach below that is now awash with sea water, we share a knowing smile before I return my concentration to the job in hand. High or low? Chalked holds on either line don’t help. I try high, undercutting strenuously, smearing along rough slabby limestone with my feet I come to a stand still after reaching left to find my holds have run out. I quickly return to the haven of the foot ledge to think again and de-pump, feeling a little flustered I’m distracted by the efforts of others.

With strength returned I look lower and spy a small foot ledge, this time I try low from a small side pull I reach the ledge at full stretch with my left toe. I reach left again and grasp a chalked ledge highlighted against the blackness of the rock; matching with my other hand I control a swing as I swap feet. I reach up to a small crack now committed as the sound of sea crashes in my ears. The crack is flared and takes nothing,

looking around I spy a hairline crack higher up in which I place a micro wire and higher still a trusty rock 3, then stack my fingers on top of it. Clipping them into the rope boosts my confidence as I search the rock for clues of the next move. With nothing in reach I put a foot up left, the undercut rock to my right forces me to use my other knee, I snatch at a distant edge, it's good, I crank hard, another edge, a big flat hold and grasp a peculiar hole into which goes a medium cam.



With feet bridged wide I hang on straight arms and look down at my last gear 10 foot below, cursing myself for not extending them more as they threaten to lift out with the lay of my ropes. I return to the hunt for gear and find a flake up and right that takes a sling and a nut higher still. Left again I see a large flake, its access barred by a blank looking wall. I look up to see a towering groove of tottering flakes and cracks followed by a route more serious than my own and use the lower of these to swing across and gain the distant flake pressing hard to hold it with both hands. Another step left, my arms now complaining I enter a runnel large enough to get inside, an ancient blowhole one half now departed. My legs now take over the strain, pressing both elbows against each side of the runnel. I wipe the sweat from my eyes and take stock of my situation, arms tiring faster than I had hoped. I'm griping too hard, I must relax! I place a nut and begin to unwind.

As I return from the zone of leading I once more become aware of the deafening boom of a boiling sea forcing its way into our zawn. My runnel now continues upward for 25 feet, featureless sections between good looking cracks and possibilities of protection. I begin to back and foot up to the first of the cracks and place a couple of solid nuts. I manage to step out of the runnel and hang off a juggy hold at the top of the crack, I relax and look back down my route to Graham, now a distant figure. He looks back at me with a look of calm. Who has the harder job? Without doubt the trusty second putting faith in the ability of their leader. We exchange a few words and I look back to a once busy zawn, People drifting off, ending their bank holiday adventures. I return to the climb and continue back and footing up my runnel made smooth by countless waves from seas of a distant world. Facing left then right and left again I move high above my gear to reach the next crack. This time a sling over a spike and large nut to prevent it lifting off bolsters confidence. I milk the opportunity for another hands-off rest and look up. The runnel is nearly at its close, I spy a thin crack and udge a little higher to place a micro wire first at its bottom and stack a rock 1 on top.

With bomber runners now clipped to my rope I feel good. My holds lead left onto an overhanging wall and up to the foot of a chimney and the sanctuary of my belay. I hesitate pondering the best approach. I grasp a flat edge with my left hand and carefully pad my feet out of the runnel, a couple of moves up on good edges allow access to a large side pull. I lean left to make the most of it, feeling the burn in my right forearm I steady myself. I look at the once overhead gear now below my feet and then down my rope snaking through the runnel, the crashing sea now running at a fever pitch. What now? I slap wildly left, seize an edge, pull on it and slap again now totally committed. A blind jug, relief pours over me, strength returns as adrenalin surges through my veins. I scamper left, a high step, another jug. I stuff the cam from Graham's belay behind the jug, clip it to the rope and let out a triumphant cry lost to the sea. I beam a smile to Graham which he returns and surge upward to a huge thread belay. The warm feeling of success stretches a smile across my face as I take in the ropes and signal to Graham I'm ready for him to follow.

We're nearly alone, just a couple remaining at the landward end as the sea displays its might steadily filling the zawn. Graham makes steady progress as I monitor the rising shadow of the disappearing sun on the adjacent wall. At last he joins me on our hanging stance congratulating me on my lead. We sort gear and ropes then exchange a fleece before he tentatively leads through. My work now done, the mantle of leading passed to a dependable friend I revel in our adventure. With gear in place he quickly dispatches a burly looking undercut traverse and disappears from view until I see a smiling face peering down through the blow hole above. I fill a short wait gazing into a now empty climbing arena and watch the crashing waves below. A shout of safe signals success and the ropes are quickly taken in. I don rock boots, dismantle my belay and set off, under cutting, lunging, smearing, bridging, jamming and bucket pulling until I join him at his belay We exchange a handshake then continue with a few grassy pulls to pop out into the horizontal world once more. I walk back half a rope length, sit down in long meadow grass bathed in late summer sunshine and bring my partner up. The last two climbers begin their walk home as Graham sprints after them to secure our lift to the campsite leaving me coiling ropes.

And the answer to the original question. Of course not! But you knew that anyway, didn't you?

Those Photos! from Jack Ashcroft.

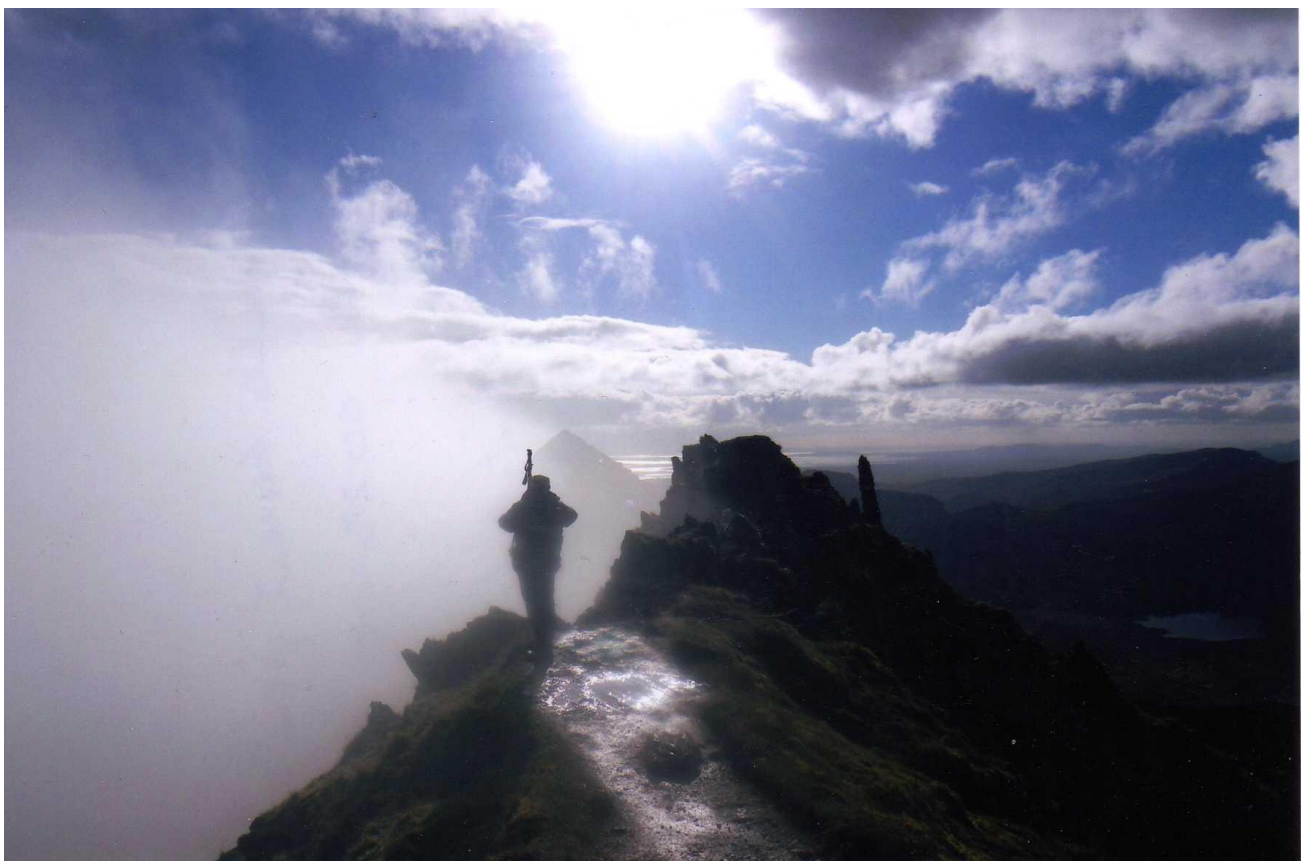


Photo from Jack Ashcroft – Digger Williams on Snowdon



Bull's Head, Foolow -Spring Stride 2008 AGM

The Official Bullstones 2010

Rob Tresidder

This was the smallest Bullstones ever. Only the meet leader turned up!

There was a number of renegade ruffians, an account of whose exploits appeared in the last newsletter.

Otherwise everything went according to plan. I caught the train on Friday evening from Edale to New Mills and then clambered down into the Tors which would be impressive anywhere but in the middle of a small town is simply astonishing. I climbed here once years ago with Roger Larkam but I know of no other Oreads who have visited. The place is further enhanced by the Millennium Walkway which clings to a giant railway embankment while the Goyt swirls fifty feet below. Impressive in daylight, it is awe inspiring in the dark. The Waltzing Weasel was warm, welcoming and hard to leave. Three quarters of an hour's walking led to an excellent bivi on the E flank of Lantern Pike sheltered by tiny gritstone outcrops.

In the morning and with some snow still lying I made my way to Mill Hill and so over the top of the Snake and then round the headwaters of the R Alport to the Grinah Stones where there was only time to eat and bed down. It was colder than the night before.

In the morning, I woke to the spooky splendour of the stones. Too stiff and cold to boulder, I was nonetheless impressed by the cup like quality of the handholds. There are no climbs listed here but it is a noted though esoteric bouldering spot. But many of the rocks looked far too big to qualify as boulder problems. Excellent walking led round the head of the R Westend and so onto the broad top ridge beside the Alport. I clambered down to the two farms and thought how strange and difficult that could be, having neighbours so very close and no- one else for miles around. I climbed Kinder by Blackden Brook and made

my way down to Edale by Ringing Roger. I had entertained hopes of catching the ruffians but they were long gone from the Nag's.

I'm sorry my route failed to set anyone else on fire. Although the others didn't leave till Saturday morning, I was told that the Friday start was not in itself a problem. Most balked at 14 hours in a bag on Saturday night, but I had a strong feeling that what my route lacked was easy access to a pub on Saturday evening. I remember my very first Bullstones, when Saturday night was spent in "the boggy heart of Migneint". Are Bullstones getting softer? The Saturday night hostelry seems recently to have become de rigueur.

One task that I set the "meet" was to elect a leader for Bullstones 2011. It seemed presumptuous to do this on my own!

Galloway on Bikes Aug/Sept 2010.

Colin & Ursula Hobday.

13 Oreads and 2 friends assembled at Hugh of Urr Hostel, near Castle Douglas to embark on a 12 day cycling holiday, exploring the areas of Galloway and Dumfriesshire.

The weather forecast for the week was all doom and gloom and the bank holiday weekend was supposed to be a washout.

However, after the initial downpour on the first day, the weather just got better and better and the area showed itself in its true colours.- quiet lanes for cycling, beautiful, peaceful lochs, heather covered hills, miles of forest tracks, all part of the Galloway Forest 7 Staines cycle area. Hardly any tourists about, fantastic B&Bs, with even better breakfasts. The plan was to stop two nights at each Stop-over, to give us chance to explore the area, go and visit castles, gardens, tea shops, ancient mottes, swimming in the sea, bird watching or pull in some more cycling loops.

Our route followed mainly along the Sustran Route No. 7, and took us via Kirkcudbright (Glasgow Girls Art Exhibition), onto the Gateway of Fleet. From there a steady uphill over magnificent wild scenery before descending to Creetown and then on to Newton Stewart. Wigtown (famous for its book shops) and the isle of Whithorn were visited. Still heading west towards Stranraer via Glassach Bridge and the three lochs, our next stopping point was New Luce, staying at the Kenmuir Inn from where we visited the beautiful Castle Kennedy Gardens. (For a Bank Holiday Monday, we almost had the gardens to ourselves).

From New Luce, now heading inland in an easterly direction along single track roads via Glossach Ridge to overnight at the beautiful appointed "Waterside Lodges", miles from anywhere - (with direct CCTV link from the barn owl's nest to the TV in the lounge).

We all had an early night in preparation for the following day which was to be our longest and hardest day of the trip. An early start (9.00 a.m.!!!) saw us heading for Glen Trool Visitor's Centre for Morning Coffee, a steady climb up Glen Trool with a stop at Bruce's stone for a photo shoot, here the tarmac finished and turned into a forestry track which took us up and up to the col at 531m. giving wonderful views over Loch Dee. Again we were the only people about in glorious sunshine (T-shirt weather). A 7 mile rough descent, brought us to the Clatteringshaw Loch Visitor's Centre where we met the Amours who were stopping in Kirkcudbright. There was another uphill climb before a long descent to St. John's Town of Dalry, staying at the Lochinvar Hotel. The following day, some walked to New Galloway, others cycled the Raider's Route through the Forest on a rough forest track with lots of ups and downs Including a swim in the Otter pool (no Otters About)..

The final day saw everybody cycling back to our starting point for another night at the hostel and an excellent farewell dinner at the local pub.

So ended another highly successful trip, with lots of highlights, lots of fun, punctures, broken spokes, bloody knees, and some getting lost before even having left the village.

Accommodation ranged was from Ex Care Home (rather appropriate) – now a Hostel, Ex School – now YHA, Ex Bank – now Hotel, the magnificent Waterside Lodges and a wonderful variety of B&B's, Inns and Hotels.

Those present. Were M&G Foster, M&S Wren, G&M Gadsby, M&G Keeling, C&U Hobday, J. Ashcroft, T. Smedley, E. Colley and two regular guests, S. Watson and G. Shaw. P.& G. Amour joining us for part of the trip.

Total distance covered approx. 280 miles.

Hut Bookings for March

Please note that hut fees should always be paid to me and no one else. Colin Hobday.

HEATHY LEA

TAN-YR-WYDDFA

April 1/2nd. Rockhoppers cottage/barn.	April 1/2nd. Oread meet.
April 5/7th. Wirral College cottage.	April 3/8th. Hurstpierpoint School whole hut.
April 8/10th. Oread meet.	April 8/10th Buxton MC 16 beds.
April 15/17th. D. Helliwell. cottage/barn.	April 15/18th G. Gadsby Whole Hut
April 22/25th. Easter	vacant.
April 29/2nd May Day Holiday	vacant.

Forthcoming Meets

April	Sat 2 nd Sun 3 rd	Tan yr Wyddfa	John Green	01332 832101
	Sat 9 th Sun 10 th	Heathy Lea – Rescue & First Aid Weekend	Pete Lancaster	01142 301136
	Tues 12 th	Committee Meets Royal Oak Ockbrook		
	Fri 22 nd Mon 25 th	The Verdon	Simon Pape	01629 822450
May	Sat 30 th Mon 2 nd	Cadair Idris	Reuben Dakin	01332 834543
	Tues 10 th	Committee Meets Royal Oak Ockbrook		
	Sat 14 th Sun 15 th	Tan yr Wyddfa	No Leader	
	Sat 21 st Sun 22 nd	Derbyshire Edges Walk & Climb	Gil Male	01695 625647
	Sat 28 th Mon 30 th	Fairhead NI.	Roger Gibbs	01246 238039
June	Sat 11 th Sun 12 th	Heathy Lea Work Party	Mike Hayes	01530 231401
	Tues 14 th	Committee Meets Royal Oak Ockbrook		
	Sat 18 th Sun 19 th	Tan yr Wyddfa BBQ	No Leader	

	Wed 22 nd	Longest(Wednes)day	Steve Christian	01629 825292 07824 623945
	Sat 25 th Sun 26 th	Gogarth	Dave Mawer	01332 512459

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