



# OREAD MOUNTAINEERING CLUB MAGAZINE

**OCTOBER 2020**



**Lunch stop on the Salter Hills on the September Boundary Walk. Photo Chris Radcliffe.**

## **Editorial**

Meets really are happening again – seven coming up in the next couple of months and plans for the 2021 meets programme are in here too. Not in the way we would like – but at least we can do some things together again.

Where would you really like to go? What new project would you like to follow the Boundary Walk?

To make meets possible in these difficult times the Committee has had to produce a Protocol plus Risk Assessments for any official meets. Please protect yourself and fellow members by reading and abiding by the Protocol on page 2. It could affect your insurance if you do not.

Lots of write ups, including Dovedale in the 50's and a sighting of the infant Burgess; mighty battles with Lake District gorse which make a mere E4 look like child's play; the lockdown memoirs of a certain Mr T ... with blood stained images some readers may find disturbing.... and a nightmare in a tight spot. This is one drama filled issue! Plus the Heathy Lea Anniversary supplement as promised!

**Copy Deadline 24 October.**

## Covid 19 and Club meets

I have a certain degree of trepidation in writing about Covid-19 as we are in another period of rapidly changing Government regulations!

We have produced a “Covid-19 Protocol” for the running of club meets and activities (these include anything that is advertised by the newsletter, email group or social media).

Meets that fall into the “Organised sporting events” category require the completion, and retention, of a risk assessment prior to the meet. We have produced a generic risk assessment that can be used for this purpose. The risk assessment is available from the club’s Covid-19 Officer, Mike Moss.

As a club we need to minimise the risk of transmission of Covid-19 for ourselves, our members and the wider community in which we operate. Please adhere to the protocol at all times, the more we all do this the sooner we can hope to have restrictions eased.

Nigel Briggs

### Covid-19 Protocol

During the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic precautions are needed to minimise the risk of transmission of the virus. The BMC has recently issued guidelines as to how clubs can run and manage meets whilst minimising the risk. <https://www.thebmc.co.uk/covid19-restarting-club-meets> Included are guidelines for groups of outdoor climbers & hill walkers. Members are asked to read and follow these guidelines whilst taking part in any club activity.

It is worth highlighting that the following statement about the public liability insurance cover provided as part of your membership:-

*The liability cover provided to club members of the BMC remains largely unchanged and will continue to provide the same degree of cover – provided, of course, that the member follows the advice of the BMC and of the Government. Failure to abide by this advice can allow insurers to avoid a claim as it could therefore be argued that failure to comply with Government and BMC advice is not taking reasonable steps to prevent accidents, in which case insurers could avoid the claim.*

*Insurers will consider each claim on its merits, but acting contrary to government and BMC advice could invalidate some claims.*

When taking part in any club activity the current Government and local restrictions must be followed along with the procedures outlined in the BMC guidelines. Currently the maximum group size is 6, unless a risk assessment has been completed and the steps outlined in the guidelines followed.

There are particular references in the BMC guidelines to precautions to be taken whilst climbing:

*Climbing partnerships (from section 3.7)*

*As far as is practical climb with members of your household. If climbing with someone outside of your household then aim to climb in pairs on single pitch and keep the same pairs throughout. If climbing in a three and/or on multipitch where social distancing is not possible – we recommend wearing a face covering.*

*In order to minimise the risk of an incident taking place, and the need to call on the emergency services, we recommend keeping climbing objectives well within your limits and avoiding riskier outings such as remote locations.*

*Climbing equipment (from section 3.6)*

*If sharing climbing equipment, such as ropes or as when leading and seconding,*

*with people outside of your household we recommend quarantining the equipment for a minimum of 72 hours after use. It is also worth taking more equipment than normal to give yourself the option of using equipment that has not been touched by others.*

*Hygiene measures (from section 3.5)*

*Use hand sanitiser before and after every climb. Do not share food or drink or equipment with anyone from another household.*

Independent groups are, of course, at liberty to go into the outdoors, however, they are encouraged to take the same steps to minimise transfer of Covid-19 and to abide by Government and local restrictions.

## **Meets programme 2021 - ideas and volunteers**

Do you have a desire to go on a club meet to somewhere in particular? Better still do you fancy leading it? If so could you let me, Mike Moss, know, on [oreadmcmeeets@gmail.com](mailto:oreadmcmeeets@gmail.com)

Stuart Firth has got in early with dates for a monthly Wednesday walk. These are generally the first Wednesday in the month, with delays to the subsequent Wednesday where there is a clash with a bank holiday. Stuart will be happy to hear from people volunteering to lead a walk. Stuart is also proposing a follow-on to the Peak District Boundary Walk, perhaps one of the Limestone, Gritstone or Midshires Ways. The initial idea is that these would be on weekends mid way between the Wednesday walks. Do you have views on a good walking objective comparable to the PDBW? Would you be interested in leading some or all of it?

As we know covid disrupted this year's meets plans; but now the BMC has produced guidance that support our running club meets of up to 30 provided we pay due regard to risk of infection by this coronavirus. For meetings where we plan to have more than 6 people a risk assessment is required. To help meet leaders we have produced a general risk assessment that meet leaders can use with a minimum of fuss for both walking and climbing meets, and I'll be able to offer advice on how it applies to your meet.

## **Forthcoming Meets 2020**

### **Wednesday 7 October Walk Churnet Valley Dimmingsdale Peter Amour**

I plan to meet up at 9-45am for a 10-00am commencement (A team), and 10-00am for 10-15am (B team - should we have more than 6) at the free Rambler's Retreat car park, sat nav ST10 4BU. Unfortunately the cafe is Covid\* hours restricted and will not be open.

The area is a mix of woodland, open country, lakes and parkland, and is worthy of visiting at any time of year - and especially in the autumn. The terrain is lumpier than your average White Peak walk, and will be a distance of about 12 miles.

Should you be interested but consider the distance too far there are short cuts to take 2-3 miles off the 12 miles plan - if you prefer this please bring a map, I can point the details out.

Route Rambler's Retreat car park - Ousal Dale - Moss's Bank - Oakamoor - Crowtrees - Upper Cotton - Moorside - Cotton - Longshaw - Farley hall - Farley Park - Barbary Gutter - Lords Bridge - Finish.

\* COVID - due to regulations as I write I request that you inform me of any intention you have to join us so I can plan any B group and appoint a route-finding volunteer.

Regulations are likely to be made more restrictive, and could well result in the cancellation of this event, please take this into account.

I can be contacted on xxxxx, mob xxx,  
email [xxx](mailto:xxx).

## **10 October Peak District Boundary Walk John Gwyther**

So the PDBW walk Low Bradfield-Ringinglow continues on Saturday 10th October. Starting at the south end of the Low Bradfield cricket ground at 10.30 (SK 26369 91859). I suggest we park at Ringinglow and either lift share or use taxis to ferry us to Low Bradfield (I'll need know how many are coming and arrange a time, nearer the time). The trip is possible by bus, takes 2 hrs and 4 changes! I did it on my mountain bike taking 75 mins and several getting off and pushing bits. The walk took 3.5 hours, contains quite a lot of 'road' walking, few stiles but no places of refreshment or loos (there are loos at Low Bradfield and at the Norfolk Arms at Ringinglow). If you would like to come on the walk could you please let me know by Friday the 9th Oct and also if you will be needing transport.

John Gwyther.

## **10 -11 October Heathy Lea 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

We had so hoped to be able to have some sort of gathering and celebration at the hut. However, there's no way we can have the sort of informal gathering we would enjoy under current regulations so we will have to hold it over until happier times.

For the walkers there is the planned Boundary Walk and for the climbers a great way to celebrate the weekend would be to repeat some of the early Oread routes on the local edges. Have a look at the first ascents on Birchen, Gardom's and Chatsworth. The names to go for in the first ascents list, in no particular order are Eric and Ivy Byne, Cyril Machin, Dave Penlington, George Sutton, Nat Allen, Keith Axon, Don Chapman, Ernie Marshall, Stan Moore, Harry Pretty, John Fisher. It would be very special to have a few words and photos of these routes. The routes include Right Hand Crack, Gardom's Gate, Oread, Keith's Corner Crack, President's Wall, Blenheim Buttress, Nowanda, Cider, Tree Neighbour, Scoop Tower on Gardoms. Horatio's Horror, Nelson's Nemesis, Barnacle Bulge, The Chain, Powder Monkey Parade, Moby Dick, Pillar Wall, Topsail and many more on Birchen. O'Reilly's Staircase, Calypso Crack, Stranglers Groove, Stranglers Crack, Throttled Groove, Anarchists Arete, Spiral Route on Chatsworth.

## **16 – 18 October Cwm Eigiau Cottage**

Meet sadly has had to be cancelled on 22 September due to local lockdown rules now forbidding travel to Conwy in which county the hut is situated.

### **Wednesday 4 November Walk Hartington Clive Russell**

Please assemble at 10am by the duck pond in Hartington where (failing memory permitting) I shall be found chilling out and bonding with the ducks. We may be able to get a morning coffee somewhere in the city, but afterwards we shall not pass any eating or drinking establishments so be prepared to dine alfresco. The plan is to shamle along the top of the East bank of the Dove and then descend to cross the river, probably at Coldeaton Bridge, before toiling up the steep West bank to enter Narrowdale and then return via Beresford Dale ford and Pike Pool. Rusty .

### **Sunday 8 November Peak District Boundary Walk Ringinglow – Millthorpe Chris Radcliffe**

This is the penultimate stage of the Oread project to complete the whole of the PDBW. The first part of the stage starts along Houndkirk Road (a popular MTB trail) crosses Houndkirk Moor before descending through Blacka Moor plantation then climbing out onto Wimble Holme Hill and across Totlely Moor before finally descending into the Cordwell valley. It is not overly long at 15 km but has quite varied terrain and minimal road sections. We will probably pause for lunch on the descent from Totlely Moor trig point below Flask Edge.

The start is at the Norfolk Arms, Ringinglow (SK 291837) and finishes near the Royal Oak pub, Millthorpe (SK 317764). There is ample parking at both ends of the route – on the verge opposite the Norfolk Arms and at the bottom of Millthorpe Lane. The drive between the two locations is about 15 minutes. The shortest cycling route is through Holmesfield, Mickley, Totlely, Dore at 10.3 km in about an hour.

To keep to Covid-19 restrictions we will walk in groups of six and maintain social distancing. Please contact me if you intend to join the walk and if you want to discuss transport. The start outside the Norfolk Arms will be at 10:30.

I look forward to seeing you all.

Chris Radcliffe.

### **27 – 29 November High House, Borrowdale**

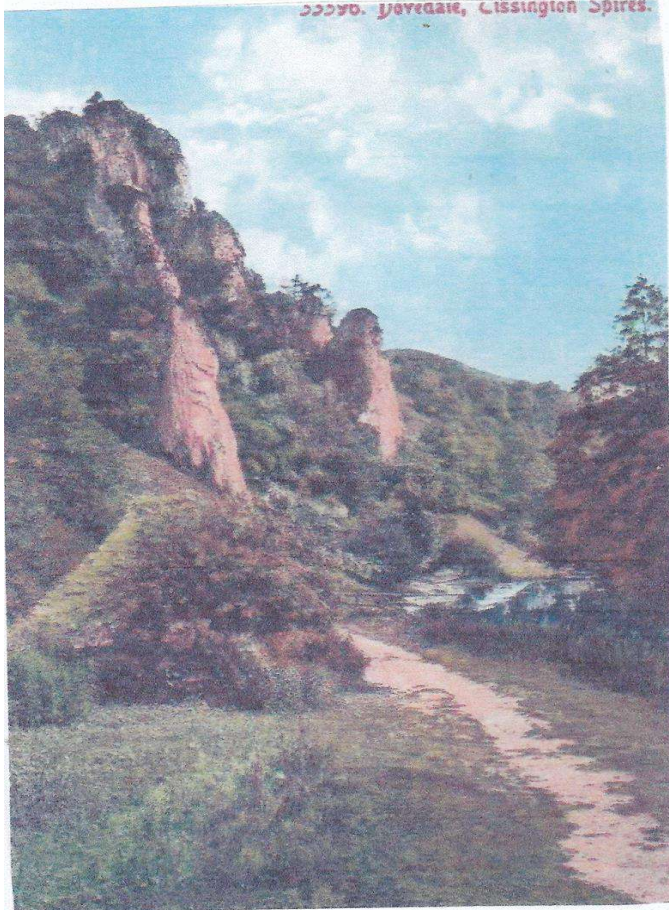
Advance notice. We have a booking for the K Fellfarers hut deep in Borrowdale. Space will be restricted due to Covid restrictions. Contact me, Michael Moss, if you are interested.

# Past Times and Old Friends

## Honorary Encounters: Tony Moulam

In the early 1940s BC (before climbing) I was an avid Youth Hosteller. The addiction stemmed from a 12<sup>th</sup> birthday gift of a bicycle, in 1939 just before war broke out. Despite restrictions Youth Hostels stayed open and I was able to visit many of the ones near and relatively far from my home in Derby. Ilam Hall had long been on my list and I soon found myself freewheeling down the steep hill from Thorpe into the Dove valley. First enthralled by the speed, I was soon overcome by the scenery, a revelation after the mundane norm nearer to home. I could not resist making a detour, along the river between the rocky bastions of Thorpe Cloud and Bunster, as far as the stepping stones and back. I resumed my way through the grounds of the Izaak Walton Hotel and signed in at the hostel.

Next day, after a self-cooked breakfast of baked beans and fried reconstituted dried egg I quickly completed my duties and left to accompany two young girls I had met in the common room the previous night. They were on foot and intended to climb Bunster Hill and traverse it to the stepping stones before continuing up river to stay at Hartington Hall. I lugged my heavy bike to the summit ridge but the going in cycling shoes was far from easy so I reluctantly left my new companions to carry on their way, whilst I descended slowly and unsteadily to Ilam, from whence I returned home.



This early brush with mountain biking left me dissatisfied with my heavy Rudge roadster, and I had already seen the lightweights such as BSA, Raleigh, Royal Enfield, and, most desirable, Claud Butlers in hostel bike sheds. I had even glimpsed a Hetchins vibrant or curly stay, a very exotic machine. As an impecunious schoolboy (my weekends used to cost between 1/6d and 2/6d, most of my pocket money) I could only dream.

Instead, and perhaps hoping to re-meet the girls with whom I had struggled up Bunster) I reverted to walking. Unfortunately this increased my weekly outlay by the bus fare from Derby to Ashbourne, and so saving up for my dream bike was delayed.

The path from Ashbourne via Mapleton to Thorpe was rural but

easy apart from the struggle over several stiles and through the occasional kissing gate with a bulky rucksack. Then the rough path by the river below Thorpe Cloud (to avoid the road on the northern bank) brought me to the entrance to the dale, where the river made a sharp turn and a gentle uphill walk on a National Trust staircase brought me to Lover's Leap. A brief rest as I sat, entranced by the wondrous white walls of Tissington Spires (So impressed that I squandered scarce pennies on a view postcard when I reached the Hartington village store). Easy downhill ground next brought me to a tranquil stretch of water, past Reynard's Cave fronted by its natural arch and Lion Rock, where the footpath was very narrow and lapped by the river, to exciting views of Pickering Tor and, on the opposite bank, the soaring blade of Ilam Rock. Dove Holes and Raven's Tor overlooked the next stretch of river leading to Milldale and the gentler reaches of Wolfscote and Beresford Dales and Hartington village and, a sting in the tail, the pull up the hill to Hartington Hall.

This became my regular weekend haunt and I varied my approach by first climbing an angler's gate so that I could follow the true right bank of the river (with rather more difficulty than the ordinary way!). Another alternative was to tackle the little rock pitch by the stepping stones and to continue over Bunster and beyond on an ill-defined ridge to Ilamtops Farm, Air Cottage and awkward going along the upper edge of Dovedale Woods to Halldale, Milldale, Alstonfield and Hulme End before dropping down to the river again by Hartington. Or sometimes I made similar variations on the other side of the river.

In any event I became such a regular visitor to Hartington Hall I was friendly with the Hinchliffes, the Wardens, and filled two supplementary pages in my YHA membership card with their hostel stamp. This tale, meandering like the upper reaches of the Dove, will soon come to its end. One weekend I had met fellow ramblers Fred and Elsie Smith, who also came from Derby. They introduced me to the Tuesday evening meetings of the local YHA, in a hall on Friargate. Here talks and lectures were arranged and refreshment provided, but perhaps more importantly members could plan their outings for the following weekend.

Apart from cyclists and walkers it was rumoured that some of the members actually climbed rock! Ron Naylor and Ted Upton, though primarily cyclists, were two I remember and the latter was revered/reviled for adventures on the mountain limestone of the White Peak. Although J W Puttrell, E A Baker and a few others had climbed and caved on and in Derbyshire limestone the current lore was that it was dangerously loose, and safety could only be ensured on gritstone – or the Dolomitic limestone like Harborough and Rainster Rocks, which were low enough for a fall not to matter, much. This would all change in the '60s when Graham West and John Loy led the moves from darkness to light! But now fickle fate intervened, for some reason that I can't recall the YHA was shut one Tuesday (perhaps it was being used for an air raid precautions talk) and Fred and Elsie invited me to their house instead. Elsie's brother was there as well with his infant son, Derrick Burgess.

This was the first time I met a future Honorary Member of the club and though I enjoyed many dinners with him we did not share a rope until, I think in June 1978, after a chance meeting at Stanage. We were at the Popular part of the crag and he led me up Nat Allen's Needle Crack, which I much enjoyed.

## **News and Reports from Meets**

### **9 September Stanage Edge Wednesday Walk Peter Scott**



*You really want us to cross here?*

From the rendez-vous at Grindleford Station Café, on a glorious sunny morning, seven of us headed directly up for the Trig Point on Stanage Edge, via Padley Gorge Nature Reserve, across the moors to the Iron Age hillfort of Carl Wark and Higger Tor (Celtic “holy hill”).

A three and a half km very breezy (plain sailing?) walk along the top of Stanage Edge brought us to High Neb, just short of the Trig Point. A scramble down the crag to the tiny path heading south brought us directly to the car park at Dennis Knoll, the path to the East provided a superb spot for lunch, encompassing a panorama for part of our walk so far from Higger Tor and Stanage Edge and the route ahead to Millstone Edge. Three hours, passing close by Hathersage, the medieval farm houses of Toothill and Mitchel Field, magical Lawrencefield silver birch woodland and Padley Chapel brought us back to the café, sadly closed. Thanks to Johns – Green and Gwyther, Stuart Firth, Susan Todd, Peter Amour and Judy Scott.



*Returning through magical Lawrencefield. Photos by Peter Amour.*

## **Peak District Boundary Walk and the Rule of Six! Pip Leach**



*Checking out social distancing at the start. Photo Chris Radcliffe.*

A big thank you to everyone who came on the PDBW from Langsett to Low Bradfield, it was lovely to see everyone, a breath of normality, albeit 'new normal'. Special thanks to Mick, Chris and Stuart, who were on hand to lead a sub group, if numbers necessitated.

We got off to a slightly later start than anticipated, due to the road works and using different car parking sites in Low Bradfield, but with masks on and

windows open, the shuttle was soon underway. This actually gave the sun chance to come out, as it had been a cool Autumnal start.



*Team A above, and Team B catching up!*

There were 11 of us in total, so we were able to divide into team A and team B, setting off ten minutes apart and allowing refreshments from Bank Side café to be consumed.

The walk was varied and pleasant. In Team A, we were slightly under pressure to get a move on, as when we stopped for a coffee break, Chris Radcliffe's red tee-shirt became visible, as team B were hot on our heels!

The ridge up to Salter Hills gave superb views of the hills on the Strines Road and also prompted some discussion on the escarpments standing out from the moorland up there. Those of us in Team A, could look back and monitor the progress of our fellow Oreads, bringing up the rear. A breezy, open trig point was our lunch stop, where Team A, and Team B could shout out pleasantries, whilst retaining social distance, of course.

The afternoon route took us through the pretty village of Bolsterstone, then hills, lanes, stream crossings, waterworks, farms all provided plenty of interest. High



and Low Bradfield are both quaint, small villages and a fitting finale for the walk, with a quintessentially English game of cricket, being played out on the green. Team B, I'd like to say we were in **hours** before you! What kept you? But that would be unfair.

Looking forward to the next leg, let's hope there are no tighter restrictions to thwart our plans.



Afternoon stop near White Lee Farm

Sunday, September 20, 2020

*Afternoon stop near White Lee Farm, photo John Green.*

## **Dry Grasp, Upper Falcon Crag Roger Gibbs**

I was bobbing about in Derwent Water thinking how pleasant it all was as the girls returned from their swim. I lazily swam out a little way out to inspect the crag. Unsurprisingly, given the thunderstorms the night before, the lower crag looked wet. I swam further and peered up. The upper crag looked ok from this distance. Worth a closer look anyway. I dried off and we headed back to the car to grab some kit. It was baking but the walk in was only ten minutes according to the guide. We strolled along the shady path. Sure enough the lower crag was soaked with run off easily visible. We walked on. Above a scree slope, the upper crag looked better but could it really be dry?

“It will only be five minutes to go and rub our noses in it,” opined my very fit partner. I eyed the scree in full sun dubiously. We had already been walking for 15 minutes. These Lakes lads and lasses must be fit. Still we couldn't go back to the swimming yet and the alternative crags faced mostly south – we would melt. Up the scree in the boiling heat then. Even he broke into a sweat while I barely survived. We paused briefly at the top before he plunged into the impenetrable gorse. Muttering curses I picked a slightly wider rabbit track and battled the thorns.

“Have you got a path over there,” I yelled.

“No, it's desperate,” came the reply muffled by dense undergrowth.

We reunited at a slight easing of the angle and an inexplicable locked gate. It leaned alarmingly over the hillside: this might be the first overhanging gate I've climbed over. We traversed wet grass and finally got to the base of the route. Wiping the sweat out of my stinging eyes, I fished the guidebook out and tried to make sense of the dripping mato grosso above me. The first pitch was a bit wet and overgrown but it didn't look too hard. Pitch two skirted a large ivy patch on the left. Except no rock was visible to the left of the ivy. We compared reality to the guidebook picture. It was pretty obvious that most of pitch two had been lost to the ivy. Inspiration dawned and I fished out my phone. UKC had the answer: nearly everyone abseils in from the top and just does the top pitch. There may have been more swearing.

Should we abandon the plan and find a different crag? Should we just go swimming? Either we were made of sterner stuff or we just couldn't face reversing the gorse of pain and the scree of doom. Up then. Better to draw out the agony and go for a long traverse of the hillside to what might be a path or cram the suffering into a shorter timeframe and tackle the gully up the side of the crag? We plumped for the gully. It was protected by overhanging gorse and I could hear water running. Perhaps it's best to draw a veil over the next minutes. "At least we're not climbing that wet rock over there."

It wasn't pretty but eventually we emerged onto the sun baked hillside and stumbled to the top. Our ten minute walk in had now extended to an exhausting hour and a half. My partner set up the abseil while I gasped for breath and tried to cool off. It only took one false start before he yelled up:

"I've found a crag."

A little later I followed down the ab rope. As I slid over the edge, a superb shady wall came into view with only one prominent streak of water visible. I slid further.

"Can you see any gear between the belay and that thread?" he called. "Maybe you could tie a loop in the abseil rope? It looks really bold."

If he reckons it's bold, it usually isn't one for the faint of heart. Pondering the intricacies of passing a knot, I started hunting for gear. There was a slightly dubious looking wire slot, then my eyes alighted on a tiny thread. I wrapped the abseil rope around my leg and struggled to untie my spare prusik. Eventually it relented and I managed to fiddle in a solid looking thread. Right, we're in business.

He went first and duly made mincemeat of it. The sun was creeping around and suddenly I was in a hurry for him to strip his runners and get back down. I racked up with nerves starting to jangle and a wary eye on the progress of the sun.

The route kicked off with some precarious balancing on a spike to stretch across from the right to clip twin pegs a couple of inches apart and eight feet from the belay. A good, small wire backed them up but it was no higher. With the gear sorted, you reverse to the belay and start the climbing proper from the left.

It was fierce and in your face from the off with sloping crimps and tiny feet. I managed to slip off first go and lowered the few feet back to the belay. What had I got myself into? Sucking in air I tried again. A high step and a little diagonal edge in the crack. Crank higher.



“Right with you,” came the trademark confidence booster. Good finger edges now. Another move and my thread was in reach. Another couple of moves and the bigger, higher thread was clipped. I was through the crux and I stupidly started to relax. There was still some climbing to do and the gear wasn’t completely obvious. I grunted left along the traverse line peering through beads of sweat to spy out the runner slots. Up into a bridged semi rest. An unobvious sequence went back right to that streak of water. Gingerly I stepped out onto a blatantly wet foothold. More gear and the final move left to relief. He had just let go with all points and then somehow reattached at the top. I sensed that wasn’t going to work for me so an involved set of manoeuvres led me slightly down, left and then up to the relief of the top. A few seconds battling through

the vegetation cornice (all together now: “No pulling on heather whether she likes it or not”) and I could belay and bring a tired but happy second (well third as he’d just led it) up.

The joy of realising we were only fifteen minutes downhill walk back to the campsite was unbounded. An adventure, a great route but a heck of a lot of work for 80 feet of wall climbing. A little gentle Googling revealed my hazy memory was correct – it was a Pete Livesey route from 1974. He soloed it with a back rope apparently. No, I don’t know how on earth you would do that either.

## **Sporting Life by Mr T (Sellears)**

When reading my last article I suspect a wry smile developed for a few Oreads who mused that I still don’t climb much harder on rock than when I joined ... “*firm but fair*” as Judge Judy would say.

Having made some life friendly changes to my business last year I boldly stated that by the end of 2020 I regularly wanted to be leading HVS. The year started

well as I became a regular Monday lunch visitor to The Unit and, after making a home-made bar, finally achieved something I've never been able to do ... a single good form pull-up !

The arrival of COVID-19 changed many things in life for everyone. For me it signalled a dramatic drop in work and the end of my excuses not to complete some very long standing DIY tasks. Although far from my favourite pastime the constant physical work did result in me losing quite a bit of weight. By the middle of May the tight restrictions on exercise were being eased and it became obvious that I'd need some help if I was going to achieve my goal. Having just watched the rather poor film remake of the hit TV series *Natalie* joked "*If you have a problem, if no one else can help, and if you can find them ... maybe you can hire The A-Team*"

"*I'll meet you at Intake Quarry 10:00, make sure you're alone*" ... the phone went dead. I arrive at the end of a long dusty track expecting to see a black van with a diagonal red stripe, this one's all silver with a pop-up roof ? We climb a couple of easier routes before ... to protect his identity I'll call him *Jugs* ... decides we should step it up. Having clipped the second bolt of "*El Sergio 6a\*\**" the rock he's standing on gives way. I catch him on belay without a problem but we both know what's happened; he's put on a few pounds during lock-down ! After I lead and then clean the route he seems pleased, "*we'll agree to help you but you'll have to commit before you can meet the rest of the team*"

I wait nervously at Colehill Quarry a week later for the other SRC-Team members to arrive. Maintaining anonymity they introduce themselves as *Dyno*, who hands me balanced sustenance for the day, and *Nuts* ... who clearly is. To reduce the risk of adding more pressure to the already straining NHS they explain that there's really only one option for me to improve ... sport climbing. I finish the day with one fall, but no submissions, for "*The Scarlet Women 6b\**" on Hamster Wall pleased with my progress.

The following week we're at Moss Rake with the unusual chance to climb unpolished limestone slabs in the Peak District. A new team member arrives called *Highball*, I guess due to his impressive height. It's not the type of climbing I particularly like, mainly because I'm not yet very good at it, but nonetheless I manage to turn in a good performance. Climbing "*Blessed Arête 6a+*" on Chert Wall at the end of the day shows my stamina is improving.

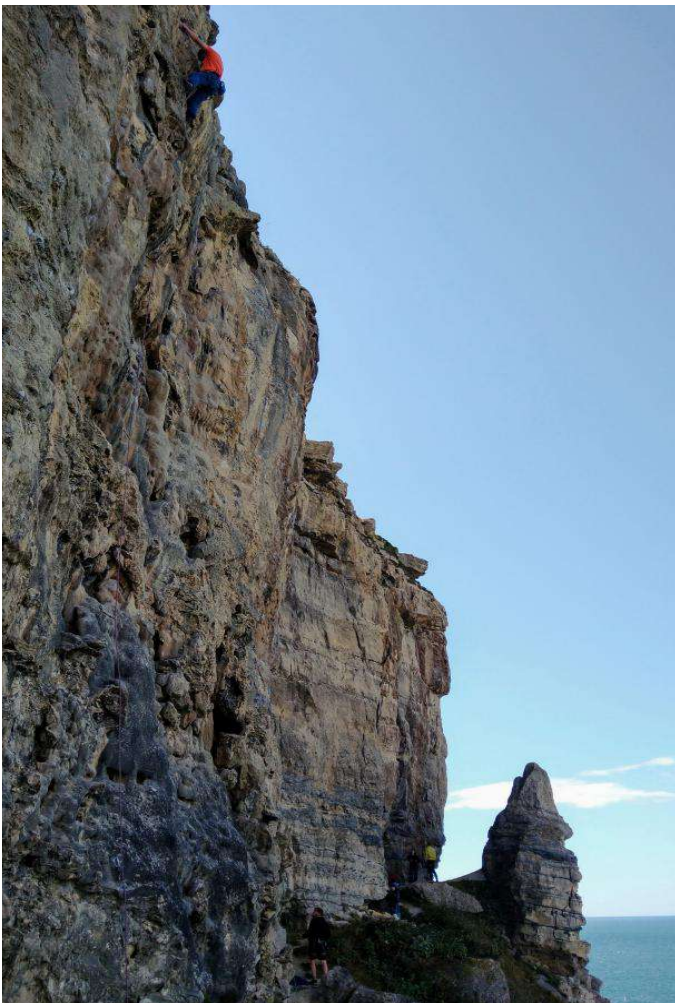
We're enjoying routes on the Red Wall at Masson Lees when we feel pressure to move with the sheer number of climbers arriving, most of whom appear oblivious to the social distancing guidance. My heart sinks when *Jugs* suggest we try the Black Walls and in particular "*Long Black Veil 7a+\*\*\**" ... there's no way I can climb any of that! I feel defeated stood at the bottom having seen *Jugs* and *Dyno* lower off around the fourth bolt. They explain that sport climbing grades assume you know the moves and routes aren't graded for the "*on-sight*", it's quite

acceptable to have a rest and try again. To my utter amazement I clip the fifth bolt before needing to rest on the quickdraw; I'm even more surprised when I continue doing this to the top. The SRC-Team congratulate me on my achievement and it's a big step forward for me mentally.

I'm not sure if it's planned but at High Tor Right Wing we're joined by the PRO-Team; they're *The Teacher*, *The Consultant* and *The Sheriff*. They keep their distance but I can't help feeling that I need to make a good impression. After my experience at Masson Lees I stand at the bottom of "Saga Lout", which *Nuts* has told me is 6b+\*, with a strangely positive attitude. I climb a bit too quickly but still, after a couple of fifty-fifty moves, satisfyingly make the top. As I'm being lowered *Dyno* informs me it's a 6c\* route in his guidebook; regardless of the grade I get a distanced fist bump from *The Consultant* "well done youth".

Not content with a possible 6c\* I vow to have another go at something harder when I next feel in the mood. This turns out to be "*Rabbit Proof Fence 6c\*\**" back where it all began at Intake Quarry. I climb positively with a calm attitude and am genuinely delighted at the finish. At the bottom *Jugs* puts it into perspective by pointing out it would be E4 6a as a trad route.

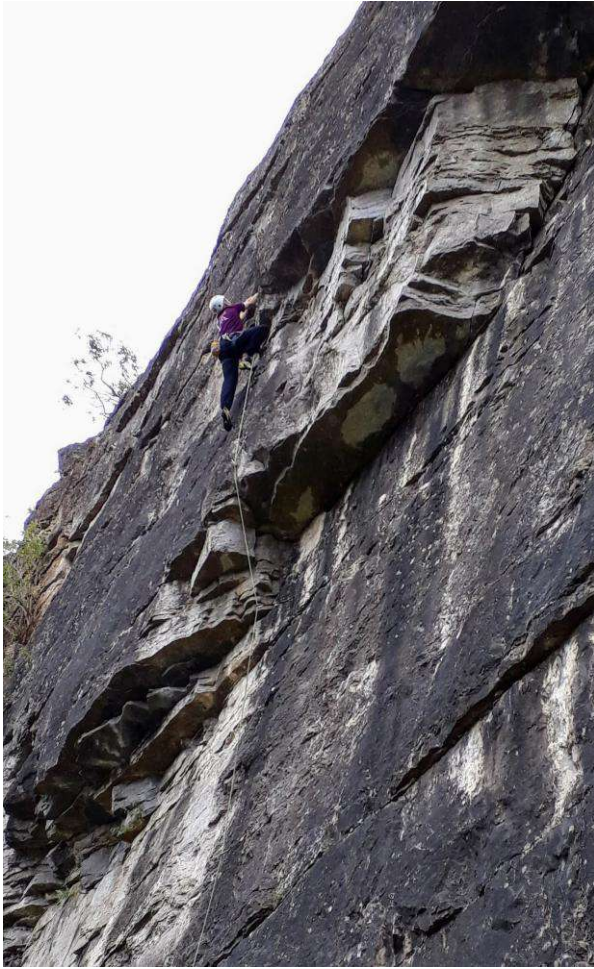
With some momentum in my progress and further lifting of COVID-19 restrictions the SRC-Team plan a trip to the seaside ... Portland to be precise.



Our base is the excellent climber friendly *The Bunker* near the harbour and 4.5 days of climbing gives me a route tally of 25. It's difficult to choose a favourite between the arête of "*Gaze of the Gorgon 6a+\*\**" and the flowstone of "*Reptile Smile 6a+\*\*\**". One useful lesson I learn while away is that my outlook for the whole day seems to be determined by the first climb ... I need something easy to start on !

*Reptile Smile 6a+\*\*\* at Blacknor North.*

Towards the end of July my work starts to return bringing a frustration when it coincides with the best weather of the week. I'm still getting out but my focus is being diluted by the now unwanted interruption of earning a living.



My next opportunity comes at Helicopter Quarry where *Jugs* suggest I try my first trad lead of the year ... I'm not so sure about the name of his choice "*First and Last*". It goes well and I'm buoyed on to try "*Burning Spirits 6b\*\**" followed by "*The Spectre 6b+\*\*\**", both of which are excellent.

*Burning Spirits 6b\*\* at Spectre Walls.*

Following my success at Helicopter Quarry I'm excited to visit Harpur Hill for the first time, especially as it's a fast sunny motorbike ride to get there. Two of the classics I want to try are "*Rocky Variations 6b\*\**" and "*Apollo Creed 6b\*\*\**", both *Top 50* routes. Things do not go quite according to plan ... having passed the crux on *Apollo Creed* and nearing the top I unexpectedly peel off after losing grip on a decent hold. Unfortunately the rope wraps my ankle as I fall down which in

turn slams me inverted and backwards into the wall. *Nuts* offers sympathy "*Ouch ... shall I lower you down ?*", I'm quick to reply "*Quit your jibba jabba you crazy fool*" before finishing the route.



Without realising it I think I'd become weary with work now back above normal levels and a constant distraction. At the time of writing pain has stopped play and I've still only done one trad lead this year ... according to UKC it was a VS 4c !

*Proof that flip flops aren't good for edging.*

**Thanks to all the covert, or should that be COVID climbers, who've encouraged me and relentlessly taken the mickey ... you know who you are !**

## Getting Stuck In (or an unusual day out) Mike Mowbray

This essay is not about enthusiasm, or an exhortation of my usual motivational kind. Not at all. This article hopes to describe what not to do, and then maybe what to do next if it happens anyway. Otherwise I trust it may just serve to entertain...

Well our Charlie is certainly keen; he has now climbed quite a lot, especially sport routes, and all over Europe (Morocco too). But what he seems to like best is cracks, especially trad cracks. 'Old school' – of course I approve of that. Katie is my middle daughter and Charlie is her partner, lovely lad – lanky certainly, always cheerful, likes playing pub poker, and really enjoys getting his Friends into all sizes of crack.

We had therefore planned a Saturday at Millstone, just the three of us, not too crowded at the weekend, easy to maintain a proper social distance (so we thought) after 'lockdown', and plenty of crack climbing gems.

We started with Gimcrack in the Keyhole Cave Area, Charlie first to lead because this was his sort of day. A nice VS dispatched with customary zeal and bonhomie. Next up was Great North Road HVS, as I was keen to suggest three star classics. Katie leading this time, and taking a few moments to get good runners in, and then commit fully to the stern crack in the middle. After that she sauntered up, and round the final overhang with confidence and skill.

I had to make my own contribution to our team effort and managed Eros, which is another HVS further along near Twikker. There was still plenty of time for more routes even after we had stopped for butties. I suggested Bond Street to Charlie (HVS 5a worth its three stars – and hand-jamming heaven). He agreed to have a look, but as we approached he found himself quite unable to walk past Crew Cut. It may look like an off-width, but surely everyone knows it is only VS because it is best done as two brisk laybacks with a rest and runners on the hallway ledge. Not Charlie it seems.... He was having none of it, certainly none of my layback suggestions. Fair enough – it was his lead.

*From The BMC Guide: Crew Cut HVS 4c \*\* 1963*

The salivating fissure. Medieval thrutching or bold laybacking...to a lifesaver ledge. With loins suitably girded attack the upper crack...

Perhaps he watches too many 'Wide Boys' videos on YouTube but Charlie wants to do battle with off-width cracks. This chance could not to be missed. He sorted out all his big friends – well both of them – a #3 and a #5. I offered him my #4 to complete his selection. Katie belayed with great attention, and the game was on. Happily there is a good chockstone not too far up, before the real difficulties begin, and this was neatly lassoed. Just a bit higher and the #4 friend seemed to have gone in and then Katie and I were treated to a wonderful display of stacked fists and hands – accompanied by a contented variety of grunts and deep breaths. I don't even think I heard a single swear word!

Halfway – and Charlie had made it to the nice little flat ledge that runs leftwards across the wall. His left foot was safely perched, and he was leaning back on his right hand against a sloping shelf on his other side. Quick as you like he fired in

his #5 Friend just above, a perfect placement, all was going so well. It was only then that he realized the #4 friend below him was not attached to either rope. Had his leg somehow unhitched it? Or had he been so much in the zone that he had somehow forgotten to clip his best runner? Who knows? But I suggested that as it was now redundant, he could retrieve it and place it higher up, thus providing perfect protection for the final difficulties.

It was tricky to reach low enough, his right hand lowered him, his left leg flexed – he was so nearly able to reach it. The only place for his right leg to go was straight down the crack, and after only an instant he announced:

‘My leg’s stuck’

And so it proved... He pushed with his right hand, he strained with his left leg, and soon he also started pulling with his left hand on the excellent Friend above. But all to no avail! I have found that when deliberately using a knee jam, you flex the knee to lock it, and then straighten the leg to get it out. What to do then – when you have lowered your straight leg down this hideous slot until it gets properly stuck?!

He might have been a tad clumsy, but I must say Charlie maintained his composure, good humour and sound wits throughout all that ensued. Perhaps that was his professional training in the ‘Rope Access’ world – I don’t know – though his work skills did not seem to help him burst free!

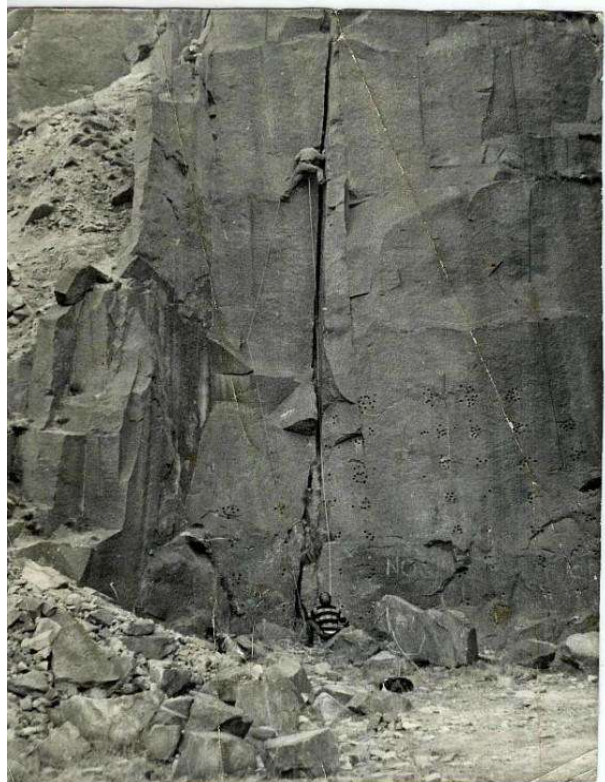
### *How it used to be done – Al Evans in 1966.*

He was stuck. I mean thoroughly crag fast, couldn’t budge, not an inch up or down, and beginning to wonder what would happen next. I got him to untie the rope not in his top #5 Friend and went up to the top with what spare gear we had, in search of concrete fence posts. I was remembering selecting my rack that

morning; perhaps my decision to leave the prussics and revolver screwgate behind because it was ‘only grit’ had been a mistake...

With two posts tied off I abseiled gingerly over a rough edge and found my way down to a sapling about 4m above our victim. With little rope left I was just able to make a 3 to 1 hoist with prussics borrowed from their friend Luke. Huffing, puffing and straining! Up 3cm with the short bit of rope available, then down 2cm as the locking prussic took hold. Then try to repeat as cursing wafted up from below. No dice. Luke arrived with more kit and we made a 5 to 1 hoist – quite pleased we could remember some of this stuff – but never with enough rope to make one good long pull. Also the single trad line was jolly stretchy as Luke and I tried to apply the force of ten men!

We wondered what else to try. A knife was found and trousers cut vertically in front of the knee hoping his leg would leave the fabric – sadly not...



We needed some lubrication – and got some cooking oil from someone with a campervan in the car park. His leg was dripping fit for sautéing but still wouldn't budge and we were running out of ideas. In two hours it would be fully dark. We hated having to call Mountain Rescue Team (MRT) during Covid times, but better sooner than later. We made the call, and while we were waiting tried to cheer Charlie up by saying at least the MRT would have the wherewithal to cut his leg off if they couldn't haul him out!

Looking at the Facebook page of Edale Mountain Rescue, I suspect this was their most interesting call out for quite a while. Certainly their team members started to arrive in short order. One of their leaders called James abseiled down and assessed the situation. Gradually more people arrived, two long thick non-stretchy static lines snaked down.

I went back up to share any useful info and found two doctors wondering what drugs to give Charlie for pain, and even how to anaesthetize him if he needed his leg off! Happily our little incident remained an engineering rather than a medical problem. Two fresh ground anchors, two big ropes, 3 to 1 pulleys with five rescuers to each, and finally a big heave.... Charlie pushed outwards (aided by James), understandably trying hard to be pulled up and out, not up and in! He was free in a few seconds – having been stuck in for around three hours. He was lowered to the ground for a medical examination, but Charlie was having none of it, and was packing up his sack when the medics arrived. No stretcher was needed and Charlie walked back to his van with less of a limp than me.

At Surprise View Car Park we realized 24 MR members had attended with personal cars and a shiny, heavily loaded Land Rover, accompanied by two police cars and five uniformed officers. We did think the ambulance with lazily revolving blue light and two paramedics had been going a bit far....

Katie had made banana bread for the W/E – it didn't last long but was a small and tangible way to express our gratitude to the wonderful Edale MRT.



A first call to MR in 44 years of climbing hopefully doesn't represent a bad habit, all I can say is if you need them, call them straight away. They were very obliging, not in any way judgmental, and mostly fellow climbers, walkers and hill folk. Charlie became a minor social media celebrity with around 4,000 hits to the thread: 'Who got stuck in at Millstone'. One asked if we had played him the film '127 Hours' to keep his spirits up (!), others claimed they would now always add cooking oil to the lists of items essential in their climbing sac! Most said we had done our best before calling them.

Apparently a sign at the bottom, and a warning on UKC were put in place to warn that laybacking Crew Cut might be a bit slippery for a while!

Although the cooking oil didn't get him free on its own, I hope it helped. His skin was red but not broken and there wasn't too much swelling. His rescuers wished him a speedy return to climbing 'but not tomorrow'. Little did they know he got 'straight back on his horse'. Katie led Suicide Wall at Cratcliffe the next day, and Charlie certainly wasn't going to miss the chance to jam and layback that most perfect of grit classics. No knee jams though. He even suggested a second go at Crew Cut but perhaps unsurprisingly so far seems unable to find a partner...

From Edale MRT:

Prior to the team attending a valiant effort had been undertaken by the climbers' mates involving pulley systems and cooking oil – sadly to no avail.

"Due to the obstinate nature of the stuck knee Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation were also called to assist. They have specialist skills when it comes to stuck body parts.

A spokesperson for Edale Mountain Rescue team said: "To their full credit, after their prolonged ordeal being more intimate than they would like with gritstone, the bruised and battered climber walked back to Surprise View Car park under their own steam."

**From UKC thread:** Own up! Who got stuck in at millstone?

That did make me laugh. Has anyone got any lube? Out comes the crisp and dry. I knew this day would come! Not gonna be quite so good that jam now is it haha.

About a similar case in Canada:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dJLN43G6KA&>

Footnote and Disclaimer:

Any similarity in visual or literary fashion to one Charlie Byers, sometime resident of Brentford, West London is entirely coincidental!

## Hut Bookings.

**\*All bookings for both huts will be separated by three days.\***

**The booked dates given below are there as a guide to members wanting to book for themselves but unless the regulations change many, particularly those from other clubs, are likely to be cancelled.**

### TAN-YR-WYDDFA

20-21 October	K Fellfarers
14-15 November	Herts MC
21-22 November	Buxton MC
27-28 November	Wrekin MC
4-5 December	Hinckley MC

Open for bookings by members and their households/social bubbles. The regulations in Wales are more restrictive than in England and are subject to change, hopefully for the better! As of now a group can stay in the hut and/or in a camper van with its own facilities in the car park.

### HEATHY LEA

2-3 October	James Tubby
23-24 October	Avon MC
7 November	Oread Bonfire night?

Open for bookings by members and their households/social bubbles. All queries and outstanding payments should be addressed to Michael Hayes, the Hut Bookings Secretary: 179 Starkholmes Rd. Starkholmes, Matlock DE4 5JA Mobile 07771 700913. Email: [michaelhayes6688@gmail.com](mailto:michaelhayes6688@gmail.com)

### A note from the treasurer:

When paying the club by bank transfer could you please use the 'Reference' box to say what the payment is for. **In particular if it is hut fees please say which hut, ie Hut fees HL, or Hut fees TyW.** Your name is not necessary in the reference, unless it is different from the bank account name. This will save me having to bother the hut booking secretary to find out which hut you have stayed at.

Thank you. Janet Briggs.

## Rusty's Puzzle Corner

### Last month's puzzle solution:

After no initial attempts at a solution from anyone else I gave Roger Chapman, who had been initially struggling, a bit of a nudge to assist him in determining the height of the mountain. Thereafter he solved the puzzle with ease and I can do no better than reveal his answer verbatim as an answer to the puzzle.

*"I was misled by AW's quirky sense of humour. 3162 was all I needed to take me to Book Four and page Scafell 4 and the start of Lords Rake. Personally I doubt very much whether there was a single set of dentures visible in the early 50's when AW was researching that area."*

AW is of course A. Wainwright and book 4 is "A pictorial guide to the Lakeland Fells, Book 4, The Southern Fells." I am surprised that others did not recognize this author's humorous style in the quoted text.

The height of the mountain could be determined by considering that mountains over 1000 metres will have a smaller sum of digits than those in the 8 and 9 100's and conversely those of below 3000 ft will have a larger sum of digits than those in the high 2000s so if the sum of the metric digits is the greater, as stipulated then we should seek a solution between 3000ft and 1000m. (3162ft sum12, 964 metres, sum 19, difference 7 as stipulated).

### This month's puzzle



Which rock climbing venue is located a short distance beyond the scene depicted, in the general direction in which the camera is pointing?

# Heathy Lea Anniversary Special

## Working parties:



*Installing the first wood burning stove. Photos George Reynolds, Harry Pretty, Colin Hobday.*





*Working party 2013*

*Working parties 2018-9*





***Children's meets.***



***Bonfires and parties – and a bit of self-rescue training.***



## Memories ....



### **Gil Male:**

Fred much enjoyed his beer. As usual we heard scuffling and muttering in the middle of the night which was Fred searching for relief from internal pressure. All he wanted was a pee! In his haste and condition he fell off the minstrel's balcony in the Barn and landed on Tony Hinks. Being under the influence himself Hinksy thought he was in luck until he realised who was on top of him. The next morning it was established that nobody was hurt and Fred had little recollection of the incident so all's well that ends well.

Hinksy didn't forget the Barn incident and one day at the Roaches confronted Fred who replied in true Scottish fashion (never let the truth stand in the way of a good photo). The rest of the story is entirely true!.

### **Tom Corker**

Heathy Lea opening was one of my moments of being. I was doing odd things with the Oread at the time, we had read "High Peak" - they had a copy in Matlock Library. So to see, I think, Alf Bridge and Ivy Byne was pretty amazing, there was a Yorkshire bloke there as well. He later on did a good job at the BMC, Dennis Gray!

### **Laura Booth and Pete Wragg**

One of the best Derwent M.C. competition weekends I remember was at Heathy Lea, after a wet week the sun came out for the competition on Saturday. Ruth was in fancy dress, (rumours of bonus points) there were lots of teams out and fierce competition, followed by a party in the evening.

We also were at Heathy Lea for Freda's and Brian West's significant birthday party. We arrived on Saturday afternoon to find Freda making huge quantities of chilli in the vast hot water urn.

I think one of the first gritstone routes I climbed was Powder Monkey parade, the day after a session in the Robin Hood with Roger Larkam and Phil.

Pete has memories of parties in the barn - Chris Radcliffe had brought his sound system and they were all dancing to Boney M. Rasputin, I'm sure there were loads of great parties there.

## **Stop Press: Heathy Lea**

We've not been able to have a working party for a long time and there are a few bits of work that do need to be done around Heathy Lea. Are you able to help? There are the perennial items of cutting back vegetation and weed control, cleaning and tidying. But there are some other more taxing items.

Would you like to practice your joinery skill? There's a fire door that needs easing and having an intumescent strip attached. Once that's done you could focus on a few other tasks!

Plumbing and electrical experience? Plenty for you to hone your talents on, such as seeking out and destroying a couple of small leaks, replacing a valve and dealing with other little niggles.

There's quite a list of stuff to do, so if you'd like to lend a hand, please get in touch so we can arrange how we can get the work done without incurring the wrath of the authorities.

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