

Fylde Mountaineering Club

August 2012



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Editorial

Sorry this edition is a little later than usual, after 30 months trying to sell up I've been caught up in two house sales and three house moves in the family in the space of 2 months!! It never rains but it pours....and an awful lot this summer unfortunately.

However, despite the British summer living down to it's usual wetness the club has still managed to get quite a lot done, although admittedly most of it was in foreign climates, and there is another broad range of articles for you to peruse.

We also have the winning photographs from this year's photo competition.

The Olympics and Paralympics have finally arrived and both have proved to be excellent events for both the competitors and the volunteers, plus a lot of fantastic results for GB - well done to everybody involved.

Caroline

Easter 2013

If the Antalya 2012 article makes you think 'wish I'd been there' then why not come with us next year. Easter is in March next year and we would like to know who is interested in joining the trip, what dates you would be available (is March too early for most?) and where you would like to go - suggestions so far have been America (Red Rocks or New Mexico), Spain and Sardinia , but anywhere will be considered.

Drop me a mail if you are interested along with available dates/suggested locations: caroline.webb2@gmail.com

Photo Competition: Landscape



Alan Bousfield: 1st Place landscape



Martin Bennett: 2nd Place landscape
(see back page for 3rd place)

FMC Committee Update

August 2012

The year so far has brought the usual mix of problems associated with the huts and the hut wardens Andy and Chris as well as several members of the committee and a few keen activists have been busy repairing and maintaining the buildings so that the excellent standard of comfort enjoyed by members can be maintained. There have been replacements of structural items such as doors and frames, repairs to windows and electrics and the replacement of major items such as the fridge and the dryer at Stair. We may be slightly concerned about being an ageing club, but one benefit is that there are a number of committee members who are often able to respond to problems very rapidly! Chris and Andy are also wrestling with new legislation about septic tanks and even trying to get new smart electricity meters installed in the huts – apparently they will work in conjunction with mobile ‘phones!

Last year the major issue was putting in place guidelines for safeguarding – this year a sub -committee has put in a bid to Sport England for a grant to renew the roof at Stair. This was not successful but as Mike Howe reported to the committee: *In spite of all the work put in by Andy Hird, Chris Bell and myself ours was not a strong enough case. There was a great deal of competition for a significant, but limited, amount of money.* There may well be another bid by the committee on a future occasion.

I took over as secretary eighteen months ago but since then, the club has had the benefit of two secretaries as Kev has continued with his painstaking work getting the Little Langdale Transfer Deeds in an appropriate form with solicitor Dave Smith and liaising with the other parties at Little Langdale so that the rights of the club are clear and secure. Perhaps this is a good place to record the thanks that the committee feel the club owes to Kev.

Rob Lewis

Antalya 2012

For the last few years our annual Easter migration to the sun has seen us on repeat visits to Spain, plus the infamous volcanic visit to Sicily.

This year we wanted to be more adventurous and opted on a trip to the Antalya region of Turkey which has seen a lot of new climbing developments in recent years. Flights were a little pricier than we had hoped, with some having to fly to Dalaman and have a very long drive to the villa – for future reference flights to Turkey go up in price alarmingly quickly in the months leading up to Easter.

The Fabulous Biker Boys, whose journey is recounted by Chris This elsewhere in this edition, rode out to Turkey and arrived at the villa ahead of the main party reporting that it was too posh for the FMC.

At the other side of Europe the B team, comprising MD, NH and I, fought our way through a very long check-in queue at Manchester airport only to find that the plane was hotter than a Turkish bath house.

Landing in Dalaman at 02:30 the next morning we were met by another long queue to get visas after which we found our car rep and set off on the epic 5 hour drive east. Aply assisted by sleeping navigators Nick and Martin the journey proved uneventful, but thank goodness I'd brought Sat Nav Annie to talk to. Whilst Nick slept of the journey the rest the team went to have a look at Akyarlar crag....one problem, road works meant we couldn't get parked where we needed....and it was raining....a lot. Oh well, we went to have a look at the conglomerate towers at Karataslar instead....in the pouring rain. No sport routes there, only trad which looked interesting but not for this trip.

After eating out at a local Kebap restaurants it was back to villa for beers (surprise surprise) and to await the arrival of Terry and Liam in the early hours.

Monday saw a day of club records: 5 members up before 10am and we actually went to the crag we had planned to go to the evening before!!

An attempt to find a short cut to Geyikbayiri avoiding the centre of Antalya failed and we had a wonderful tour of the back streets of somewhere, just don't ask where. At the crag a few climbing sectors were checked out before we

settled on 'Gizmo 3' (page 69 in guide) for the first routes of the trip. Chris and I warmed up on a 4 (not a HARD 4) before we both led up a 6a...2 routes in and I'd already done the 6a I wanted. This was followed up with some 5a/b routes, some of which were brand new so suffered with a bit of loose rock towards the top. Meanwhile, the rest of the party warmed up on some 5s before moving on to the 6a, 6a+ and 6bs.

A quick beer back at the villa and then out to eat at Hussain's little diner – massive amount of salad provided, along with a barking mad waiter as entertainment....Darling (you had to be there folks).

03/04/12: Last night's plan was to go to Olympos...could we have 2 days in a row without changing plans? Amazing....plans stayed the same. Sat nav took us the wrong way so we had a slight detour down the wrong road before realising that the track showing on the sat nav doesn't actually exist. Olympus: Dersane gorge isn't a super crag but we did get a few routes done despite Liam being on one route over an hour, but he did do extremely well considering he was on the wrong route and it was a grade or two harder than the one he had planned to do. A quick move over to the Horguc crags for more routes then it was back to the villa to await the arrival of Paul Taylor and company. Nick 'volunteered' to fetch Andy from the airport at 01:00 who typically ignored the luxurious bedrooms available to him and opted instead for the camp bed in the downstairs corridor...why do we bother booking a bed for him ?

Mug of the day: Terry for leaving his rock boots at the villa and having to borrow Chris' boots to get anything done.

The following day saw a return to Geyikbayiri and the hard boys (AD, MD, LG and NH) went off to find hard stuff whilst the rest of us didn't: I foolishly started with a 'warm up' on a 6a (Magic Dice) followed by a 5c, a 5b and a 5a, with top rope entertainment provided for Paul and Johnny on the 6a and the 5c.

Mug 1 of the day: Terry (is a pattern forming?) for belaying Chris and being dragged in to the rock, when Chris fell, causing multiple deep scratches.....tis only a flesh wound he was heard to say.

Mug 2 of the day: Terry (yep, definitely a pattern forming here) for 'losing' his guidebook that he had actually left in his bedroom.

Thursday saw us at Cirali where Terry and Tom went for a bumbling day on the beach and round the archaeological sites in the area before having a wander up to look at the Chimaera eternal flames at Yanartas (visit after dark to get the full effect). Cirali crag proved tricky to get to with a detour through the grounds of a restaurant and some jungle bashing required. The Yavas Nick team (Liam, Andy, Martin and Nick) joined us at the crag just as we had finished our second route. I had been a little nervous about the large spiders webs dotted around the crags but hadn't considered the possibility of scorpions until a large evil black member of the species dropped onto the track beside me as we descended from the crag!!

Friday is market day in Goynuk so most people went to have a look round....lots of food, clothing and jewellery stalls with plenty of haggling opportunities (Andy was rampant in the food market apparently). Chris, Tom, Liam and I then went for a walk up the nearby Goynuk gorge. It was a hot slog up in the sun but the gorge is very impressive once you get to the top and start wading.



7 April saw a team head out to the ruins at Termessos at 08:45 (yes, in the morning!!) leaving Andy, Nick and Martin to their own devices (aka following Andy's instructions for shopping and preparing the evening meal).

It's amazing to think that such a large town as Termessos could have been built in such a remote location and judging by the very large and multiple cisterns there must have been problems with obtaining enough water, the large number of sarcophagi also pointed to a high mortality rate. Having arranged with Chris and Paul to meet them at Geyikbayiri, my day took a down turn when I had a very heavy fall on the descent back to the car park from the ruins – nothing

broken and no blood spilt but a badly bruised left shin which left me hobbling for several days with the bruising eventually covered the whole of my lower leg and, as it turns out, I had actually managed to separate the top layer of skin from the underlying muscles, and yes that is as painful as it sounds. No pain no gain they say.....cobblers I say. After a bit of healing by Cristina it was on with the climbing. As the sun set Tom and I returned to the car to meet Terry and June, but they weren't there; looking up we saw Liam just reaching the top of a route. Won't be long we thought, how wrong we were. 30 minutes later, with even the bats using headtorches, we looked up to see him half way up another, even harder, route - he must have been using the force to find the holds and bolts.....there's keen to climb and then there's madness....and then there's Liam.



Nick Hepburn self portrait (according to Mr Dunhill)

8 April was Liam and Terry's last day in Turkey so they went to Akyarlar just up the coast to get some climbing in before flying home. The rest of the team went to Olympos and visited a variety of crags: Kadir's Treehouses (convenient location with a few easier routes), Vadi (steeper and more strenuous) and Dalton crag ('next' to Vadi but very easy to miss as Chris and I found out, also very sharp rock). The descent from Dalton is not easy, especially with a bruised shin, and is definitely not a crag to descend from in the dark.

On the way back to the villa Paul detoured through Kemer to show us the frankly weird Amsterdam Central hotel, an exact replica of the real train station in Holland, which is only beaten for weirdness by the Queen Elizabeth hotel in Goynuk which is an amazing replica of the cruise ship.



9 April was Diving Day. Mr T was calm and relaxed about going diving thanks to our pep talks that as it had all turned out okay in Jaws, Open Water and The Deep he had nothing to worry about.

Philippe and Hulya lead us in convoy down to Kemer marina where we boarded the North Star diving ship before heading out to the 3 islands where those of us who wanted to could go swimming/diving.

Whilst the pro divers had their first dive a few of us braved the waters for a swim and snorkelling session behind the boat but finally it came to the nervous wrecks dive and after we were given a briefing on various hand signals and dos/don'ts we were given wetsuits. Whilst some people (Andy) slipped in to their wetsuits with no problem, one of us, with a more robust build, needed the assistance of 2/3 people to get her in to the overly tight rubber (ed: it didn't help that the suit was very tight on my bruised shin). We were then led to the back of the boat and kitted up with weights and tanks – Andy was a little put out that he was given the same amount of weight as Nick but we pointed out that it must have been all that methane he contains.

Once in the water we bobbed around in the sea getting used to breathing through the respirators while Philippe concentrated on trying to get Chris comfortable in the water but despite a valiant effort he decided that it just wasn't for him and got out again. Which is a shame because it was an amazing experience swimming amongst shoals of fish which were darting in and out to feed from our hands.

10 and 11 April saw returns to Olympos Dershane and Geyikbayiri with some climbing being done between the rain showers. That evening's meal was Celeriac/potato/cabbage soup, Fried potatoes (with coconut, turmeric and coriander coating) with a spinach/mushroom curry. Egon Hepburn was heard to exclaim 'it wer alright'...high praise indeed from our culinary master.

The next day called for a visit to Olympus Cennet which is accessed from Ceralis via a walk along the beach and a river wade. A good selection of routes were completed and Martin had a near death experience when a careless squirrel dislodged a large boulder from the top of the crag sending it crashing through the tree behind Martin.

On Friday the 13th we met our first truly honest market trader who proclaimed “Rich tourists...give me your money” :), and Andy and Chris caused great hilarity when they tasted a fruit that Andy didn't recognise (no I didn't think that was possible either). This was also the day that we finally got to Akyarlar which is lovely looking crag right on the beach...just a shame the grades are so darned hard, and even Andy resorted to some external aid.



The next day was the last day of the trip for Martin, Nick and I but fortunately the weather cleared enough for us to make a run to Geyikbayiri to try to get a few routes done before we had to leave. After returning to the villa for refreshments and packing we left the villa for the last time to drive around the coastal road back to the airport; a note to everybody - if a biker says that a road is fast that does not mean it is straight, or fast, for cars.

Our return trip home was completely uneventful apart from running late due to very bendy roads, being stopped by the Jendarme (fortunately just for one of the regular random stop checks of licences, unlike the Likely Lads encounter with the Fuzz), nearly running out of fuel twice (well they did say bring it back empty but we'd be amazed if the car rep made it the 5km back to the nearest filling station) and a 4 hour flight delay.

All in all it was another excellent FMC trip and we all had fun and enjoyed everything....except maybe for Chris and the scuba diving.

Postscript:

16/04/12: Message received from Andy that it was very hot and he was going up Goynuk gorge before making his way to the airport for his flight home. I was slightly puzzled because his flight in had arrived at 01:00 on Wednesday, not Tuesday, and the incoming flight usually arrives before the outgoing flight as it works better that way.....but he's a university lecturer so couldn't possibly have got that wrong.

17/04/12: 07:16 message from Andy “Dropped bollock, flight Wednesday morning”. I didn’t laugh...honest, but at least it gave him chance to look around the old part of Antalya and the museum.

Notes on visiting Turkey:

The people are very friendly and eating out in Turkey can be very cheap if you stick to the smaller local cafes. Beer can be got from the supermarkets at around £1 (2.5TL) per bottle but expect to pay £2.50 (5/6TL) in the few eateries that provide it (not many do). Wine is very expensive with the cheapest we found the equivalent of £6 (14.90TL) a bottle, but the average was nearer £12 (30TL) a bottle.

Diesel is very expensive at about £1.80 per litre and you need to be alert to the attended service guys putting the most expensive fuel in the car if they think that they can get away with it (e.g. Shell V Power instead of normal diesel).

Driving standards are relatively poor – people do ignore red traffic lights, undertake, weave in and out, drive up the wrong carriageway, drive at night without lights (and on the wrong side of the road), overtake round blind corners on solid white lines, etc etc

We had generally good weather with temperatures varying from 19C to 29C and only a small amount of rain, mainly overnight.

Wildlife:

The incredibly noisy birds next to the villa turned out to be unbelievably loud frogs in the neighbouring swimming pool and they chirruped away all...flippin...night.



Terrapins, turtles and tortoises are a common sight, as are multiple species of lizards. Red squirrels were seen at the crags and Scorpions are present at some crags so it’s worth checking your shoes before you put them back on.

Ladies Meets 40th Anniversary

ADVANCE NOTICE!!!!

According to astrological calculations, studies of Star Charts, trawling through ancient records and dredging the depths of what I laughingly refer to as my 'Memory' I am confident that NEXT year will be the 40th Anniversary of FMC LADIES MEETS! This, I am sure you will agree is worthy of a SPECIAL CELEBRATION!!

What better way can there be to celebrate other than to have a meet where as many lady members as possible gather together to enjoy the usual fun, frolics, laughs, good food, excellent company and if all else fails - maybe a walk!

Since another 40th Anniversary will not come round again for a few years (!) it would be nice if ALL ladies could make a SPECIAL effort to join in this SPECIAL occasion! The Meet will take place Fri/Sat/Sun, 21/22/23 June 2013, at Stair Cottage.

The date has been selected as being at a time when other commitments are not usually so demanding. (i.e. away from Christmas/school holidays/summer holidays/skiing/World Football Cup, etc!) Further, since there is at least 12 MONTHS advance warning it should be possible to alert other parties (Husbands, children, grand children, In Laws, family and friends etc.) that this is the one time in the year when your freedom is sacrosanct and you will be unavailable at the drop of a hat for child minding, relative visiting, concert going, tooth extraction or other totally unacceptable duties or distractions from the MAIN EVENT of the YEAR!!

It would be particularly nice to welcome back ladies who have not attended for a few years – catching up on news can be such fun!

So what should you do now? Clearly you should rush to WH Smiths, buy next year's calendar and write in the DATE of THE 40th ANNIVERSARY MEET in HUGE RED LETTERS!!! No, don't wait – do it NOW!!

COMMIT!!!!!!!!

Jennie Tolley (Chief Whip!)

Olympics 2012



Our very own Olympic volunteers

The Olympic beacon lit on Brantfell, Bowness



Coast and Castles Bike Ride

6-9 April 2012



Fired by their success doing the C2C last year, the famous “Wheely Hot Women” felt like another, somewhat gentler challenge. The Newcastle to Berwick section of the Coast and Castles route was chosen and the group expanded a bit, even including a few men. We were 15 altogether, average age 56+, FMC members, friends and relatives: John and Sue D, Alan and Angela L plus son Ben and partner Ronni, Pete and Steph H, Richard and Helen T, Liz R, Becky, Nikki, Debbie and Frances W.

Various training rides had been arranged from January onwards, and most of us went on at least some of these, so we were quite used to each other when it was the real thing.

Good Friday morning saw half of us on level 8 of the designated multi storey car park attempting to pay. 15 pound coins per car was a non-starter and the advertised “helpline” was useless, as on a bank holiday all they could do was say they couldn’t help! Finally, with great patience and stamina, Frances and Debbie managed to sort out a card payment over an inaudible phone line. The

spiral descent on rippled concrete was a novel start to the ride! At the station we were joined by the others who'd come by train or stayed independently. Progress was easy, weather cool but dry. After a coffee (usually including cake) stop in Tynemouth, we stopped at Seaton Delavel Hall (NT) for a bite and an interesting visit. Rain came by 3 pm and kept up until we reached the Old Ship in Newbiggin. The pub was in a bit of a state (the rooms were nice, though), but the landlady was the model of hospitality. She saw to our every need and arranged for fish and chips to be brought in from the nearby chippy. The beer was good, too.

Saturday was dry and the first break found us at a great ice cream cafe in Amble above the harbour.



Eventually dragging Liz away from this, we paid a visit to Warkworth Castle where we presented an odd spectacle walking around in our high visibility tops with personal audio guides. Then on to attractive Alnmouth, where Steph at last indulged her passion to get in the sea – up to the knees, anyway. Nikki did likewise. To our relief, Ronni explained all about the off-putting foam – harmless, and caused by the flagellations of diatoms. (Look it up!) Cream teas followed, and Becky demonstrated her remarkable skill of falling asleep in a perfectly composed upright position! The final stretch of the day involved some hard climbing to Alnwick and our base, the rather swish youth hostel. Bunks,

of course, with open plan snoring, but facilities en suite. Evening meal was in a splendid Italian restaurant arranged by Nikki.

YHA breakfast on Sunday was outstanding. Some set off for Boulmer, while chief mechanic John D had a few tyres and other probs. to see to. Reunited, we continued over often rough tracks to Craster and Dunstanborough Castle. At this point, those in the know kept to the road, while the castle purists had to do a bit of portage through dunes, up and down rough steps and over (unpopularly) a golf course. There were tight gates, too, a challenge in tandem handling for Alan and Angela. Lunch at Seahouses was a chance to recover. Heading towards Belford, with lots of up and down, it was noticed Liz was no longer with us. She had missed a turn and had been spotted whizzing straight on. Richard, ever one to relish a challenge, pedalled off vigorously in pursuit. From this point known as "Sheepdog Richard" or "Richard the Retriever", he rejoined the group, with Liz, not too long afterwards.

The downward trend in accommodation continued at Belford, where we were in a bunkhouse, one men's dorm, one women's, but loos and showers were a good 50m away. But it was quite cosy, and John entertained those with the stamina to listen with assorted arcane bike technicalities. Nikki and Becky had made other arrangements, as in Alnwick. We heard tales of luxury and even high octane porridge!!

Monday's breakfast was at a nearby garden centre, and quite excellent it was. The highlight of this last day was the crossing of the causeway (tide was conveniently low) to Lindisfarne (Holy Island), where some time was spent exploring and looking round (or eating/drinking), and Frances went in search of a geo-cache. Thrill of the day for Becky was a turn on the tandem with Alan along the causeway.

Returning over the causeway, it remained to ride to Berwick. Seeing quite a hill stretching away in the distance, Liz got her head down and speed up. Unfortunately, it wasn't the way we were going, and, Liz being oblivious to our shouts, Richard the Retriever went into action again!

The last stages into Berwick were interesting – rough tracks and grooves through grass, stony paths and the odd bit of tarmac. From the cliff-top the approach to Berwick was exhilarating, and we had time to enjoy the view as John and Alan were again dealing with Debbie's tyres; her rather thoroughbred machine might have been more at home on a velodrome!

In Berwick, our bikes were loaded onto a special trailer behind a minibus, which took us back to Newcastle, a most efficient operation. It was a great trip enjoyed by everyone. We even got on well with each other!

Our special thanks go to Frances for the huge amount of work she did planning the route, finding and booking accommodation, dealing with timings and sorting the money. Brilliant.

Peter Hope

Hut Swap with the Vagabonds MC

This was our first visit to the rebuilt building at Nant Peris and what a change. We had stayed there many times on meets in years gone by when the Vags rented this property and it needed things doing to it. We remember waking up one morning to find snow blowing into the dormitory in the attic and settling on our sleeping bags. That was the time we walked through the quarries and came upon a castle in the mist, where we had not seen a castle before. It was part of a film set. A walk to Llanberis and back was all we did that day.

The “new” hut is superb two stories now and a well equipped kitchen all mod cons and a large sleeping area. The common room remains much as before which is a nice touch.

Anyway there was only June and I there Friday night to see the sun shining on Saturday morning, that soon changed and we had a medium level walk, very nice as the only heavy shower was before we left the hut. On the way back through the quarries there were climbers on many routes, enjoying the warm dry rock. Also between two rock faces a group were “slack lining”. Walking across the line, with harnesses and a safety line onto the wire, their poise and balance was amazing.

In the early evening John and Claire joined us rather muddy about the legs and replete after dining in Pete' Eats. So off to the Vaynol arms with a good choice of beers.

Sunday was a rare day for this summer, we all had a good day on Moel Siabod, no rain until we were in the valley walking to the cars, high cloud before that, superb long distance views and dry rock on the ridge going up, even some sunshine and warm enough for a leisurely lunch stop. Only a pity there were only four of us there to enjoy it.

John and June

Two Travel to Turkey

“You’d be better off flying with the others” they said. “It’s a long way, especially on a bike”.

Admittedly both Tom and I were more than a little apprehensive. I had ridden part of the route before in 1980; a 4 week trip Blackpool to Athens and back with Joy on the back of my R80/7, without breakdown recovery insurance as well. However, that was in summer. This trip saw us setting off on 21st March to ride further from home than we’d ever been, leaving the security of Europe for the unknown of Asia, with potentially wet, windy and cold weather to accompany us.

Actually it was an absolute doddle. What was all the fuss about? I ruled a line on a map joining Calais to Istanbul and followed it as closely as possible on the fastest roads. We landed in Calais early Thursday afternoon and arrived at the Turkish border Monday lunchtime, 4 days later. We had no problems, didn’t bust a gut riding and even had good weather for most of the journey. Temperatures dropped to 6 C in the drizzle whilst riding South through Austria and we rode through a heavy storm on the Sunday evening whilst negotiating the pot holes of Sophia’s ring road. It was a good thing that there was little traffic so that we had time to manoeuvre around them without trucks and cars cutting us up in the very poor visibility. But that was it, no other hassle. Even riding down to Folkestone was easier than I’d ever encountered. The M25 traffic flowed nicely, no queues at the Dartford Bridge and straight on to an earlier ‘Chunnel’ than we’d booked. In fact it all went too worryingly easy. We stopped just north of St Quentin, France on the first night, East of Munich, Germany the second, through Austria and Slovenia to the middle of Croatia the third and through Serbia to about 30 miles East of Sophia, Bulgaria the fourth night. We used hotels as campsites in Northern Europe were not yet open and they are cheaper to book the further South we travelled. And it only took us half an hour to clear Turkish customs. As I said, a doddle.

We’d allowed 10 days to reach the house I’d booked at Goynuk, just South of Antalya in Turkey but with only 3 days easy riding before us, we had time to kill. From Edirne near where we entered Turkey we rode South to the peninsular



we Brits know as Gallipoli and had a look around the WW1 battlefields. Then crossing the Dardanelles to Canakkale we basically followed the coast South towards Antalya, stopping off at numerous archaeological sites including Troy, Ephesus, Xanthos, Patara and Pinara, all well worth a visit.

We met up with the other 9 'flying' members of the Hot Rock Team on time as planned and had a superb time climbing etc, not using our bikes at all until everyone had flown home. I have to say what a brilliant house we had as well as a base. More of this is in a more climbing dedicated article elsewhere in this magazine.

Leaving Antalya we rode North East to spend a few days taking in the remarkable scenery and dug out homes of Cappadocia. Continuing North we stopped at the ancient, ruined Hittite city of Hattusa, most impressive, to eventually hit the Black Sea coast at Sinop, a lovely fishing port. We then rode west



following the coast on some very sporting if not challenging roads, stopping off at Amasra and Akcakoca to then head for the main Motorway which would take us through Istanbul and eventually Edirne again near the Bulgarian border.

We bumbled back a different way home as you would expect. We rode North through Bulgaria to Ruse on the Romanian border, North West through Romania to Arad, on the Hungarian border and then West through Hungary into Croatia and Slovenia. Unknown to us we chose to camp by the Danube in a lovely town called Baja in Hungary, a place we later discovered we'd previously stayed in on our 'Transylvanian' excursion a few years ago. Quite a coincidence we thought. We stopped off at a superb campsite in Rovinj on the Croatian coast about 40 miles South of Trieste, which we used a base to go climbing. From

here we headed into much more well known territory for us. Travelling North through Slovenia into Italy, we camped in the Dolomites before riding West to stay with Paul Taylor and Cristina at her villa in Ardesio, Northern Italy. It was here we had by far the worst weather of the whole trip. It rained more or less continuously from the Friday night until the Sunday night, putting snow down on the surrounding mountains. Luckily we had sanctuary and weren't camping. The last 3 or 4 days we journeyed back to Calais via Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Luxembourg and Belgium. The 'Chunnel' only cost us another 3 Euros for the privilege of returning several days earlier than planned and the ride back North through England was smooth and more to the point, dry; 52 days in all and 7,500 miles of riding.

Highlights of the trip, well :-

Meeting many friendly, helpful and interesting folk I suppose, especially in Turkey.

Being put in Room 101 for a night in a Turkish Hotel.

Following and having to back track down the 'road to nowhere' in Northern Turkey, another challenging ride which took about 3 hours out of our planned ride that day.

The best hotel of the trip in Hunedoara, central-ish Romania which we used as a base for a failed attempt to cross the highest pass in Romania but was closed due to snow and rock fall.

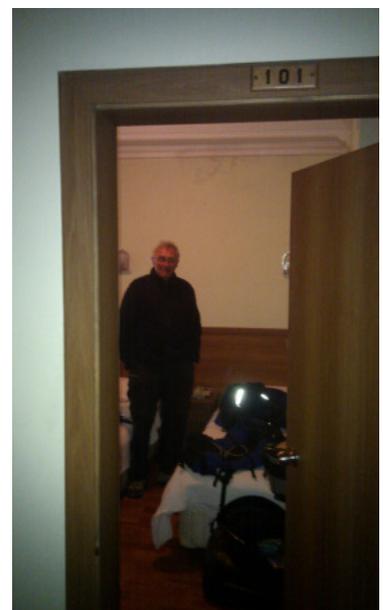
Avoiding a monster hole in a Romanian road that would have swallowed the bike.

Negotiating heavily pot holed roads through poor villages in Bulgaria after being detoured around washed away roads.

Avoiding wild Tortoises crossing the highways in Turkey.

Oh... and our encounter with the Turkish police.

To cut a long story short we were pulled for riding 4km/ hr over the 100km/hr speed limit on an open, quiet highway (*Ed: yep, heard that one before*). Whilst the police were checking our documents, my hidden Euros and Pound Notes made a bid for freedom in the blustery wind that prevailed that day (don't ask). It took half an hour or more for Tom, the police and myself to retrieve said currency. The police, still holding our licences then told us to follow them and shot off down the road at about 130 km/hr. We followed them into a police



compound, shown where to park our bikes, leave our helmets and ushered into the building. Scenes from the film 'Midnight Express' which we had been watching only a week or so earlier were playing in our minds as we were taken into an office with yet more police. The first question asked of us took us a little time to register "Are you hungry"? Not quite knowing what to answer we were escorted into another room and presented with a substantial meal. A few other policemen joined us and we had a most friendly, civilised and interesting 40 minutes or so, the main means of communication being a translation program on an old computer with a Turkish keyboard and half the letters missing. I'm not really sure what I actually said (typed) to them as what they asked me didn't really make enough sense but they seemed happy.

They were certainly happy enough to present us with a 154 TL fine (about £60) on a hand written ticket which we were told to present at the customs office when leaving the

country. This we did several days later but were only fined 115 TL for some reason and given a hand written receipt. Apparently the Turks have yet to link computers to a working data base. We could have actually left the country without paying.

The only other police encounter we had, well Tom had, was being fined 30+ Euros for crossing a solid white line in Italy. I was in front and expected the Carabinieri to stop me but it was the reckless and dangerous Mr. Knowles they wanted. I was of course innocent; crossing solid white linesme?

All in all an excellent trip. No bike problems this time. Turkey was the only country we didn't have breakdown cover for yet was the country I felt most relaxed in. The Turks were the most helpful and friendly people I've come across, not that other nationalities were the opposite, far from it. Whenever we were looking at a map or looking for a hotel, within minutes someone would appear and sort us out. I'll definitely return but won't lose any sleep if I don't eat another Kebab ever again.

So, the rest of you FMC 'Bikers', Fenna, Clifford, Robinson, Bell, Broughtons, Tolley, you've no excuses. Where are we all going next year?

Chris Thisthwaite

Ladies' Meet June 2012

The advertised sunny days were missing, and the barbecue cancelled- but we nonetheless enjoyed a damp weekend in the northern Lakes. On Saturday we walked around Wythop and over Sale Fell, with fine views despite the weather, and vowed to return on a clear day. We met a cheery member of the Cockermouth Rescue (moving rather more quickly than we were), who assured us that he "liked it like this"- just as well. A communal feast replaced the barbecue, followed by a very exacting board game. Sunday saw us exploring Scope Beck and the Goldscope mine, worked by German miners for the first mining company formed in the north of England, in Tudor times, and closed in the 1860s. Here our company was a group from the Carlisle Mountaineering Club, whose hut was visible below. They told us that their beautifully sited hut has gas cookers, but only a chiminea for heating, and no electricity.

The next Ladies' Meet will be September 7th-9th. Since this coincides with the celebrations for the end of Preston Guild, we will be based in Preston. Fireworks! Please book in with Liz Rawcliffe.

Rhyd Ddu Hut Swap Oread MC

Feb 18th and 19th 2012.

Well only three people went Dave Earl and us two.

The ice climbers said they would go if the ice was good-----it wasn't.

The rock climbers said they would go if the rock was dry----it wasn't

and most walkers had other things on. We went down on Thursday and came back on Monday and went out each day including a snow covered peak. As usual the hut was superb with a warm coal fire to sit by in the evening.

When we got back I suggested to the chairman that a different time of year might be desirable but he had already sorted the 2013 hut swaps.

John and June

Photo Competition: Action



Tony Hulme: 1st place action



Adrian Clifford: 2nd place action



Alan Bousfield: 3rd place

Orienteering Meet

This was the weekend that the sun shone favourably on FMC! Perfect weather for everyone to enjoy a toot round Whinlatter Forest Park - at least most members enjoyed themselves with one notable exception - but more of that later!

Sue and I were asked to dust off our planning skills to provide a bit of fun suitable for the younger associates of the club and some of the old hands as well. Whinlatter is a great venue for the purpose with a good caff and bogs and a decent map; the only drawback is the steepness of the terrain. No matter; we used the permanent course posts with full sized orienteering kites, added a couple of extra ones and had a classic cross country course suitable for the youngsters and a “collect as many as you can in 1 hour” event for the others. 10 points for each control point visited with a 5 point penalty for each minute over 60 minutes.

CARNAGE! Young Eddie Hird (accompanied by mum) beat mountain marathoner dad Drew. Dad managed to run along the wrong forest road and off the map! Silly Billy! It cost him 20 minutes or so and the race, together with a lot of ribbing.

So, how did they all get on, you ask. So let's cut to the chase:

Liz and Eddie were FIRST

Kevan and Clive were SECOND, despite esteemed chairman sustaining serious injury

Drew was THIRD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

and JENI and PETER were fourth

All were in the top 10 and all very close to the 60 minutes.

On the Short course it was a close run thing between the Tolleys, Lucas and Sophia, ably shadowed by dad Danny and mum, Mikala. Jess Hird snuck round in close proximity hoping to pip the Tolleys at the post but, in effect, they all arrived together so they all won. Yippee!!!!!!!!!!

The evening meal was most enjoyable and vast quantities of a four course feast were consumed!

The weather for Sunday was as predicted (for a change!) and the planners set off on their bikes for the day and the others went out to enjoy the Lake District at its very best.

A great weekend contributed to and enjoyed by all who came; those who didn't missed a treat (and a good feed!)

Thanks to all who came, especially Sophia, Jess, Lucas and Eddie who seemed to have a great time and didn't wake up too early!

John and Sue Denmark

Pensioners outing to Ullapool

Yet again another Ullapool week has come and gone, even after so many years there is always a new experience, this year Geology and the Moine Thrust and Moine Schist and Durness Limestone and Pipe Rock. In the Ullapool News we were told that there was to be a free guided walk led by geologist Donald M Fisher, Georanger for the North West Highlands Geopark. We went en masse, all 10 of us. Despite the cold grey morning a record number of 40 people turned up and streamed along and up the path like a trail of ants. Donald was a great communicator, constantly repeating the material until it sunk in although one of our members seemed to have a mental block remembering 'The Principle of Superposition'. However I'd no room to talk. It took until the next day for me to remember the names of the 2 Victorian civil servants who were given the 10 year task in the 1880's of surveying Assynt in their sports jackets, collars and ties producing evidence to shatter the conventional wisdom of Superposition. They were called Peach and Horne and we were told they were equally important in science as Einstein, Marie Curie or Watson and Crick. Eventually some of our ladies were shivering and one kind man from Hartlepool lent Jennie an extra layer of clothes. Donald kept treating us as English Jubilee fanatics despite the man from Hartlepool saying he had come to Scotland to get away from the Jubilee. At times it was observed that Eddie was nodding off but he claimed he was in a deep state of mind focusing.

Not that the weather was grey and cold in general, most days were sunny and I became sun burnt.

The Fiddler was approached by Lochan Tuath and on observing the magnificent buttress Kevan began to build a sand castle! We climbed the steep left hand path and after much groaning made the summit.



On the next day 5 of us made it to the summit of Conival, a Munro. Whilst John and Delphine and Kev and Christine stormed off to the top I had to resort to eating my last Mars bar, it was so old and sticky that the paper was inseparable so in desperation I ate that as well.



We were rewarded by sensationally clear views of Quinag, Foinaven, and Ben Hope amongst others. This was a particularly rewarding experience for Christine, it was her first Munro, hence the photograph showing her with an ecstatic smile and the prospect of doing a further 282.

The Chairman with his entourage made his annual pilgrimage to Stac Polly, and enjoyed a leisurely sunbathe on the top. Myself and Christine fancied just sitting on a beach, and found the perfect spot near Achiltibuie. I spent ages gazing at a panorama of hills from An Teallach through Beinn a Chlaidheimh, Ben Dearg Mor to A Mhaighdean and remembering the great days in their company, would I ever visit them again? Christine just paddled.

The final day out found most of us on the long and hot and sunny walk from the coast to Lochan Gaineamhaich beneath Sail Mhor.

We didn't have a mermaid to sit on the rock just off shore so we attempted to get 6 people sitting on it, probably a world record. With the benefit of the Chairman's tripod and a bit of tuition on how to get on your own photograph we succeeded with a photograph to prove it. Eddie Craig arrived later or we may have got 7 on and established a new world record,



it will have to wait until next year. We were so elated by this wonderful day out that the Dundonnell Hotel called, we eventually got in and were served by a very nice French girl. Two of us were so hot that we drank pints of Stella at £3.95 a pint. The beer stimulated a very wide ranging discussion on Peach and Horne, Watson and Crick, probably Laurel and Hardy and then Eddie told us that there is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries on such a full sea are we now afloat and we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures. It was a very wide ranging discussion!

Things are not as laid back in Ullapool nowadays, I thought I had parked in a harmless back street but received a notice from the Northern Constabulary. It said that my car was parked illegally 'to' near the end of the street and within the zone of the continuous central white line as 'definded' by the Highway Code and was signed by TW3. Fortunately it was only a warning so I parked my car on the other side of the street beyond the white line. When next day I bumped into TW3 he was a decent bloke but he said I was still parked in a bad place. I was advised to park in the High School car park amongst the teachers cars. We shook hands and I had been advised not to mention his creative spelling!!



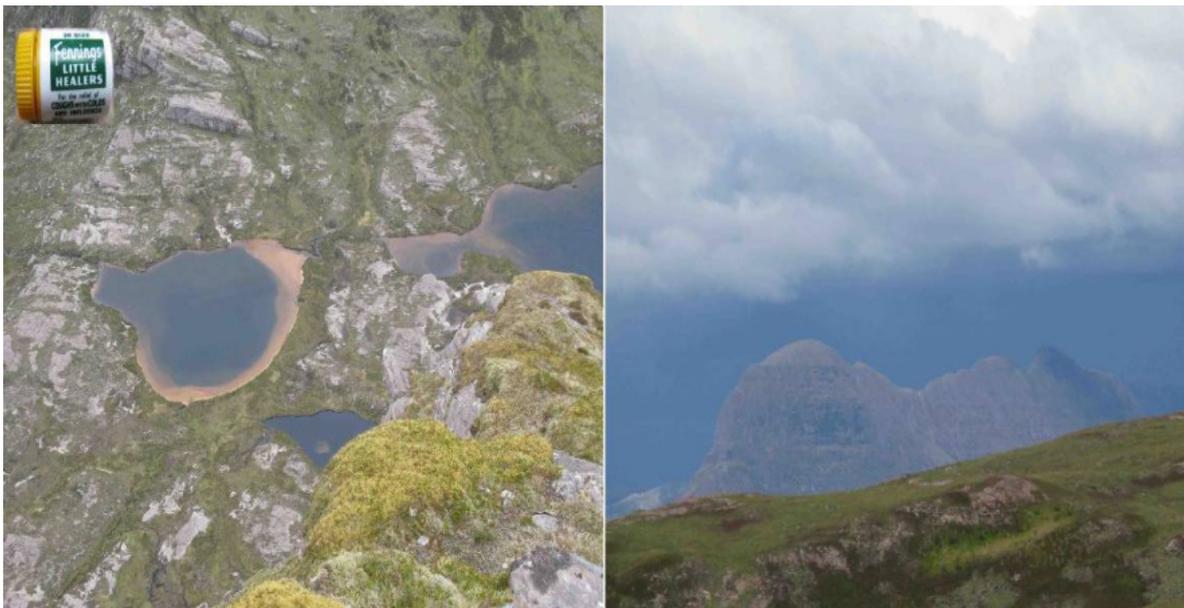
Another first this year was the Argyll Hotel Beer Festival within a two minute walk from our cottages. Fortunately we had that Camra guru Derek Smith to advise us on our choice. One night after a session, myself, Clive and Eddie were seen on our knees leaning against the sea wall.

This was not due to intoxication but to a superb golden full moon beaming over yachts in Loch Broom, an experience not to be missed.

One evening Jennie and Kevan had a long complicated argument about spring tides and neep tides. It turned out that they were both right. You learn a lot on these trips.

The big event for Glynis was her birthday party, fit for Royalty, held in our own conservatory in the Morefield Hotel. Thanks to Jennie's prearrangements the ten of us were very professionally served with an excellent range of dishes. A bit of a change from 2 years ago on Clive's birthday when he, Eddie and I shared a cake with a few candles on the top!

Finally for some of us there was the annual trip northwards to Kylesku for the langoustines and finger bowls. Jennie and myself had pints of Guinness whilst Eddie preferred Merlot followed by a 15 year old Glenfarclas. Everything was excellent. It was at this point that Eddie and myself discovered that we had a sort of sixth sense. We were talking about rubbing chests with Vicks, sort of thing that pensioners talk about. Simultaneously we both blurted out 'Fennings Little Healers', in my case some unknown visitor had recently left a tube of them which finished up in my Hoover(sic). According to Eddie in our childhood they cured everything! We could also have had Bile Beans.



So home we came, all a little bit wiser about Geology and Shakespeare and neep tides. Two of our members are soon to have treatment we hope, one to give him some more 'umph' and the other for a new hip. I hope they return reinvigorated next year.

Barrie B. Crook

June 2012

Family Meet Stair

4th and 5th August 2012

Another full family meet and yet another ascent of Cat Bells. The family meets are always well attended and we have a core of families who attend regularly. Ed's tenth birthday on this meet made us realise that it must be nearly ten years since Family Meets reappeared on the syllabus. Since those early days when there was just us, then the Bells, followed by the Tolleys we have had some great weekends and met some new friends. The original children have all grown with the eldest now starting secondary school but we are really pleased that we still have families with toddlers and babies joining us – so the children's ages at the last meet went from 18 months to 11 years. The Friday night was the usual arrival of families throughout the evening, trying to carry small children from the car to the bunk without waking them whilst the older children were snuggled in their dorm but definitely not asleep! Friday is usually a bit of a late night with some delicate heads in the morning. Saturday morning saw us up and preparing for a full group ascent of Cat Bells (Ed's choice as it was the first hill he climbed without parental carrying), we strolled from the hut and were up and down in record time which meant we were safely in the pub before the thunder storms. After the children had consumed a birthday tea of pizza they settled in their bunks whilst we had a communal meal. Sunday saw us heading home for a birthday meal whilst other families went swimming or tackled low level walks. Although the meets are well attended we still welcome new families; it will not be that many years before our children will have grown up and we will have to leave these meets to the younger families!

Andy, Liz, Ed and Jess Hird

Morocco Bound Again

Words by Martin Bennett. Photos by Martin Bennett, Alan Blackburn and Mike Rhodes.

This was the third trip to this wonderful area in as many years for Alan Blackburn and me. This time for a variety of reasons some of our previous “trip-mates” couldn’t make it so we were a party of only three, Woody keeping us company. We flew to Agadir and headed directly for Tafraoute this time. The first couple of days yielded little in the way of quality climbing but in climbing “Stairway To Heaven” on a crag named “Agouti”, situated on the col at the head of the Samazar valley we got to look down into the valley for the first time and get something of a feel for the enormous potential for huge established routes as well as new ones. Did I say established? Hardly. Most haven’t had second ascents.

We’d by now moved into our “home” for the trip , **The Riad Tafraoute Hotel.**

(Below)



“Stairway To Heaven” (185m, VS) takes the blunt rib L of the big overhang

It's quainter and quieter than other places we've stayed, but comfortable for all that. Better climbing fare was had in the next couple of days, first on a crag called Adrar Iffran in the Idouagnidif Valley, but only after we'd worked out that the clearance of our old rattling hire car was adequate to the task of taking a run at the broken steps in the newly concreted road left after a recent flash flood. (see picture). Having successfully negotiated this hazard and the usual dirt road that followed we climbed "Gold Rush", a 120 metre HVS which has a fairly long approach, some good climbing (see picture) and an easy descent on foot. Another good route among the "established" or guide book routes was again at the col above Samazar, on Fig Tree Wall. The route is "Braveheart" a 200 metre pillar of excellent rock definitely worth it's 3 stars, providing each of us with a sustained long lead.



Left: The mighty Logan versus flood damage!

Right: Woody on Gold Rush



Below: Alan contemplating the soaring ridge of "Braveheart"



I think we'd all agree that, good though these routes were, our best days were the ones we spent doing new routes – an aspect of climbing I'd largely missed out on until coming here where, with a little help from "the old guard" – the original pioneers of the area, we've found plenty of opportunities. This time we wanted to go back to what is

now known as Fylde Crag to have a look at the wall to the left of the route we put up here last year, “Sez Les”. It’s steep for the first hundred feet but Dave had spotted a weakness and made a good job of leading a first pitch me and Alan thought to be 5b. The second pitch goes up and left at a more amenable 4c/5a and leaves an easier pitch to the top. Altogether it’s a 100 metre route of E1 which was named after an appropriately titled play about Woody Guthrie which Hal had read about - “Woody Sez”.

As happened in 2010 when he took us to what’s become known as Fylde Crag, it was Les Brown’s suggestion that a party of eight approached an unclimbed crag above the road from Tafraoute to Sidi m’Zal. Here there were four new routes done that day, all two to four pitches and VS/HVSish. Les and me did the red route on the photo below and called it No Country For Old Men.



Alan and Dave climbed the wall on the left (Cold Turkey) while others in our happy band made first ascents of other lines further to the right – no details but they reported them very satisfactory at the same sort of grade. A tentative name for the cliff is Octet Crag, because there were 8 of us, not just because the knighted one among us is nearer eighty than seventy years old!

Les pulled another rabbit out of the hat later in the week when he took us to one of the crags in the original guide book, again in the Sidi m’Zal area, called in that book Crag NA. He’d done the first route on the crag back in 1997 and others subsequently and had noticed on the descent an unclimbed face round the back of the crag. The four of us went there and bagged a new route for each rope. Dave and Les did “Date Line” (VS) at the left end of the face while me and

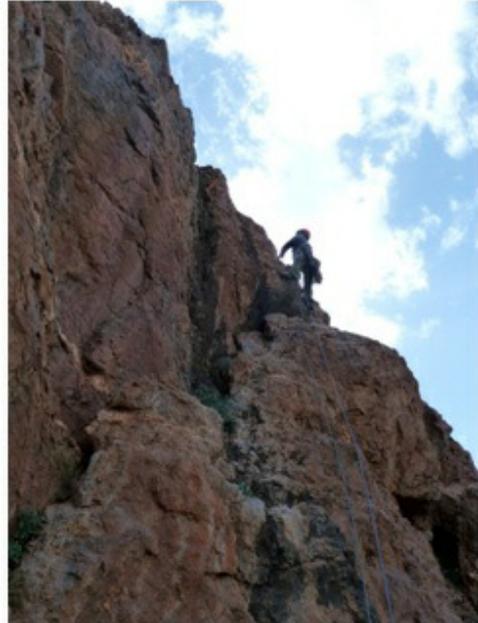
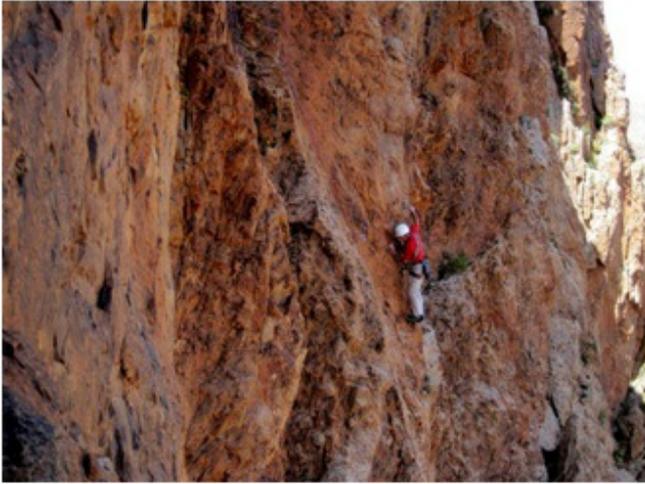
Alan were on a route we called, in homage to the local cuisine and Noddy Holder, "Gudbuy T'gine" (geddit?)



Gudbuy T'gine HVS 110 metres. -, 5a, 4c, 4c

This has a long easy first pitch followed by a crux gaining the groove on the very nose of the crag; thereafter are a further two pitches sustained at about VS and staying pleasingly close to our idea of climbing the nose of the crag.

We'd other days out during the trip visiting eg Middle Eagle Crag and some of the roadside cragging venues such as Ksar Rock and Robin Hood Rocks. There we did a good Severe called Sherriff's Wall which has a remarkable, unprotected second pitch on delicate edges.



Above: MartinB on “No Country For Old Men” pitch 1

Right: AlanB on top pitch of “Gudbuy T’gine”

Below: MartinB on “Woody Sez” pitch 2 (left) and the crux of “Gudbuy T’gine” (right)



The trip was brought to a fitting climax on our last evening when, it being the 20th anniversary of the first time climbers, in the shape of Les and Trevor Jones and their wives, had booked into the Hotel Les Amandiers, and in gratitude for the business that has followed, the hotel elected to put on a “Gala Dinner” for the dozen or so of this pioneering group who were there this week. We were not staying there by then so, having been there for a post climb beer and a blether we prepared to leave as the others were going into dinner when the

manager stopped us at and insisted we join in the fun, causing the great and the good of the main party to have to shuffle round the table to make room for us! Nice gesture, we thought; “good for business” the cynic might say!



Sherriff’s Wall at Robin Hood Rocks – note, above Dave’s hand, the nature of the only runner!

Below: these characters (well, most of them!) and their surroundings give an idea of the charm of Tafraoute





Octet Crag first ascents.

MartinB on pitch 2 of No Country For Old Men and Woody on pitch 2 of Cold Turkey.

But where are their seconds? Write your answer on a £20 note and send to MartinB!

Photo Competition: Humour



Nick Hepburn: 1st place humour



Steve Wrigley: 2nd place humour



John Hickman: 3rd place Landscape - Ama Dablam