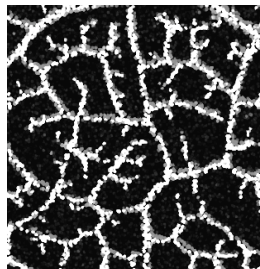
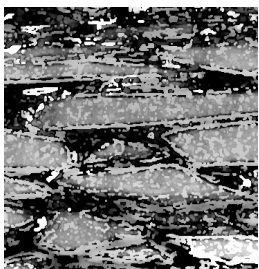
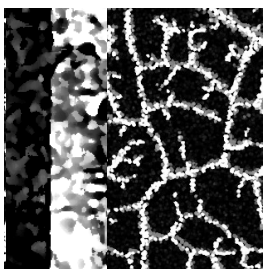
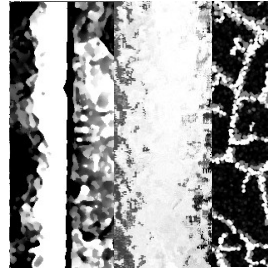
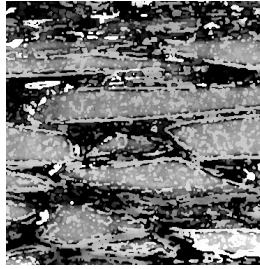
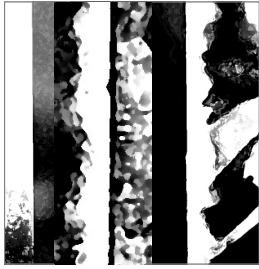
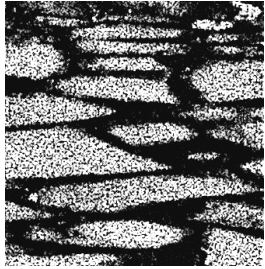


red rope bulletin 26 *spring 2014*



Lancashire Mountaineering Club's 'Cae Ysgubor' hut will soon be open for business! The LMC self-build team have put together a superb building that fits neatly into the mountainous landscape. Red Rope can be proud to have been involved in this exciting development.

Congratulations are due to the LMC, especially to those stalwart members who have grafted blood, sweat and tears to create this fine building - working in often inclement weather, with inspiring team morale, sometimes against great adversity, but always with fantastic vision and heart. So what's involved?

The right hand (single storey) section: large, open-plan lounge-dining-kitchen; ten-seater bespoke-built dining table; lounge-type seating (t.b.c.); lofty roof-space with two large velux windows; natural slate floor.

The left hand (twin storey) section: downstairs - one 'family' room: bunkbeds for 4, en suite shower & loo. Second room: bunkbeds for 4, plus single bed (disabled access). In the corridor: fully disabled-access shower-room & toilet, drying room. Upstairs: bunkbeds for 10, with adjacent toilet. Beds: 10 upstairs + 9 downstairs = 19 !

LMC and RR fervently hope that the hut is complete in time for the 5th of April: LMC's formal 'opening day'. Local dignitaries, Welsh Assembly, Sports Council, RR and BMC representatives and also celebrities from the mountaineering world will be in attendance. We look forward to helping them cut the ribbon! I'd like to say a great thanks to Richard Toon of LMC, who has been a pleasure to liaise with - always enthusiastic, positive and indefatigable.

RR has already booked its first meet: at Easter (17-21 April). S.W. Region have the honour. Leicester Region have a meet planned for 12-14 Sept (t.b.c.)

RR has now closed the Hut Fund. There is £325 remaining which will be used to purchase something readily identified as a gift from RR for the new hut . Suggestions welcome please!

***What does 'Cae Ysgubor' mean in English?
'Cae' means "field"; 'Ysgubor' means "barn".
So I guess it means "the field with a barn".***



VIEW FROM REAR prior to stone cladding

HUT SHARING AGREEMENT F.A.Q.

LMC and RR have signed an agreement which now paves the way for RR members to book both huts belonging to LMC. We can book the huts both via normal weekend hut bookings, but also, as individuals, we can flexibly book bed-nights, as effective 'honorary' members of LMC.

Q. What LMC huts are there?

A. [i] The newly built 'Cae Ysgubor' Hut, near Beddgelert, Nant Gwynant, Snowdonia, Wales. G.R. SH602487 (access from Sygun Copper Mine)

[ii] 'The Loft' Hut, near Blea Tarn, Little Langdale, Lake District. G.R. NY295048 (access via Blea Tarn House) The derelict 'Byre' (the cow-shed beneath 'The Loft') is receiving approval for future development, for LMC accommodation. (A long while off yet.)

Q. Is it possible to camp at either of the huts?

A. Definitely NOT at The Loft hut. At Cae Ysgubor a small tenting area is planned for the rear of the property in the future. (Full hut fees & conditions would still apply.) NB Cae Ysgubor is immediately adjacent to Cae Du campsite, which has excellent facilities (open Easter until end Sept.)

Q. What about children and dogs?

A. Children are welcome (£4/night). Dogs are not allowed in LMC Huts. They are welcome at neighbouring Cae Du campsite (£1/night).

Q. Who can make bookings?

A. RR National Trips Secretary, Regional Hut Bookers or individual RR members - ALL enquiries go to RR's Bed-Night Booker (Barbara Segal).

Q. Do we contact LMC to make Regional or individual bed-night bookings?

A. No. In all instances, you need to contact the Bed-Night Booker (BNB).

<HOW?> She liaises with the LMC over bookings, and can advise when a booking can be made for either Hut.

Q. What sort of bookings can we make?

A. RR can book one Bank Holiday weekend a year, which will be selected by the National Trips Secretary. Each year regions are allocated the right to book two non-Bank Holiday weekends from a wide choice of dates. NB Cae Ysgubor has 19 beds. The Loft has 15. Additionally, up to 200 individual bed-night bookings can be made for any time of the year.

Q. How do we pay for these bookings?

A. On the National or Regional weekend trips you pay in the usual RR manner - i.e. in full, in advance, in accordance with your Income Band. The RR AGM made a decision that trip-fees may be reduced by 20% but LMC have since announced The Loft Hut fee increase to £5/night and Cae Ysgubor Hut will be set at £7/night. So RR will have to review banded rates at next AGM.

For individual bookings at the Loft p.n.

Band A-C £3, D-F £5, G-H £6.50

For individual bookings at Cae Ysgubor p.n.

Band A-C £4.50, D-F £7, G-H £9.50

(Figures to be ratified by N.C.)

<How?> Email your booking enquiry:

bednight@redrope.org.uk

Send cheque payment for number of Bed-Nights required. Also a separate cheque payment of £50 as key deposit.

When a booking is confirmed, the key will be sent to the booker in advance of the booking. The key is the property of the LMC. The booker is responsible for the key. The penalty for the loss of the key is the £50 deposit. The key must be returned to the BNB by the first post following the end of the booking. On safe return of the key, the £50 deposit cheque will be destroyed. Late return of the key will lead to the booker losing the right to use bed-nights for 2 years in the first instance. Further infractions of this simple rule will lead to more severe penalties.

Q. Is it possible for me to have my own door key to Cae Ysgubor?

A1. Yes! Each key is actually an electronic fob. Any Red Roper can request one, for a RETURN-ABLE deposit payment to LMC of £20. (Key fobs remain the property of LMC.) Contact Pete Kos (Huts Liaison Officer) by end of March, or as soon as possible, as LMC are putting in a bulk order of Key Fobs. Eventually (t.b.c.) fobs are to be available for purchase direct from the LMC website. Having your own key saves you furnishing a £50 key deposit each time & waiting for the key to arrive to you by mail. You would still have to email the Bed-Night Booker to book your nights.

A2. Alternatively, any RRer can now also become an Associate Member of LMC (annual cost t.b.c.) You would no longer have to book your nights via RR's Bed-Night Booker. You would deal direct with LMC's Hut Booking Secretary. The advantage being that you can book at almost nil notice - or just turn up - as with other LMC members!

Q. The door keys are electronic fobs. How do they work?

A. An electronic door locking system is being installed in Cae Ysgubor. (And eventually to the doors at the Loft and the Byre (once the lease with the N.T. there has been agreed.) All these doors may be opened using one simple 'proximity' key fob, held close to the door handle for a moment. The system is already tried & tested across all eight Climbers' Club huts.

Q. This all sounds fantastic. Are there any restrictions?

A. Certainly. These privileges apply to fully paid-up RR members only. (No guests permitted.) The BNB may check with the RR Membership Secretary to ensure that all those booking are fully paid-up members. If take-up of flexible bed-nights is high, individual members will be limited to 14 bed-nights per year. Even if take-up is low, the BNB will rule if a member is judged to be using an excessive number of bed-nights. (Any member attempting to use one of the huts as a temporary residence will have their membership of Red Rope revoked with immediate effect.)

There are some other rules, which you will be sent when you make your booking. As you are using the huts as an honorary member of the LMC, you are asked to behave in a thoughtful and responsible manner whilst on site.

Particular care is needed with parking & access at The Loft hut out of sensitivity to the residents of the immediately neighbouring cottage, Blea Tarn House.

Q. Who is responsible for running the Hut-Sharing scheme?

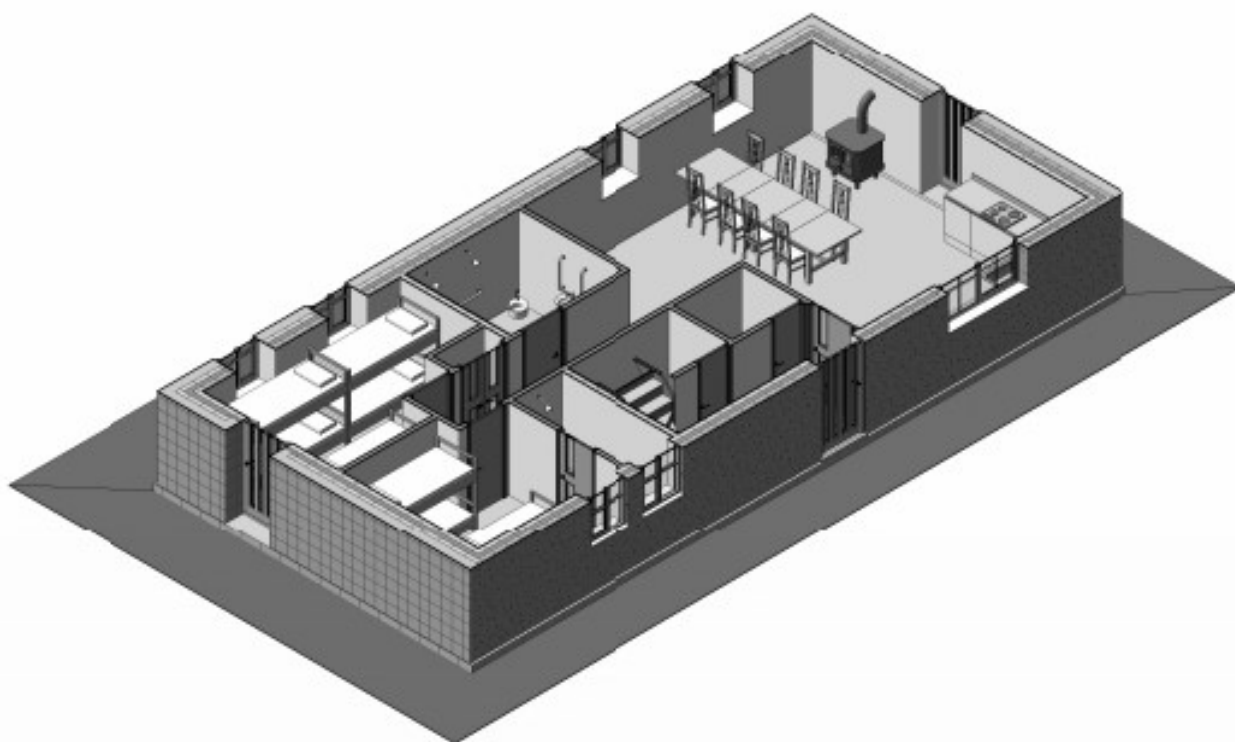
A. RR has a Hut Sub-Committee, which will include the BNB, Huts Liaison Officer, National Secretary and National Treasurer.

The BNB works with her opposite number in the LMC, whilst the Hut Liaison Officer corresponds and meets regularly with officers of the LMC to deal with any issues that arise.

ALL BED RESERVATIONS AND QUERIES FOR L.M.C. HUTS (whether individual or regional bookings) to be emailed to bednight@redrope.org.uk

(The RR Bed-Night Booker, currently Barbara Segal, liaises directly with the L.M.C.'s Hut Booking Secretary.)

RR members, or regions, should not contact L.M.C. re hut bookings or Pete Kos. For other hut related issues Pete's email address is: pete.koss@yahoo.com



red rope news: all the stuff, minimal guff !

bulletin@redrope.org.uk

Many thanks to all contributors. The next deadline is the end of June. I took the photos on the front and back cover during the Bristol trip to Ullswater last Easter. As we found out, late March isn't always bouncing lambs and crocuses! However, the hut warmed up after the first night and we had a snow-tastic time. *David Symonds*

membership

Membership is back over the 300 mark following a welcome spate of new members. If you have joined since the last bulletin – welcome! Thanks also to those who have renewed recently. Several of you have mentioned that you didn't receive the first renewal reminder. Two years ago we started sending out first renewal reminders by email only (unless we don't have an email address) and this certainly seems to work for the majority. For those who haven't received them, I suspect that the emails may be being trapped by your spam filters. If so, make membership@redrope.org.uk a 'safe sender'. I can't tell you all how to do this because ISPs and E-mail readers vary. If you're using Outlook, you should have one or more Junk E-mail folders. If our renewal email is in there, you can right-click on it and change its junk status. For other packages, explore your mail options or ask your mail provider. *Steve Wright*

archive

The Red Rope archive, long resident at the home of one A. Bateman, has now been lodged at the Working Class Movement Library in Salford. It's in good company as the library also houses archive materials on Benny Rothman (of Kinder Mass Trespass fame) and the Clarion Cycling Club, which grew out of the distribution network for a new socialist paper produced by former journalists from the Manchester Evening Chronicle. It also contains lots of stuff on workers' and community struggles including those that are still ongoing. The library is a great place to visit – friendly staff in a beautiful old house and with lots to see, so do pay it a visit if you're in the area. *Barbara Segal*

arthur's memorial map

A map dedicated to Arthur Howarth is now on display in The Alex MacIntyre hut, Onich (a few miles south of Fort William) where Arthur was a voluntary warden. He also managed their bookings. The map was funded by Arthur's Red Rope friends who attended his funeral. *DS*



Some members felt that attempts to out-do cooks on Red Rope trips had gone too far.

an invitation

I went on two glorious hikes with Red Ropers while living in the UK. The company and the walks were both grand. I was never a member. I would like to make a donation – in part as my gift to you and in part as membership for my friend Lesley Wade. I can honestly say I hold the Red Rope Club warmly in my heart. It added a lovely dimension to my year! And oh yes – if any of you find your way to the Pacific Northwest, I'd be happy to try and host you! With gratitude, Becky Liebman becklieb@earthlink.net

LMC hut, Langdale

Lancashire Mountaineering Club have had their planning application to develop the Byre at Blea Tarn approved. This means they will be able to extend the Loft (downwards, into the 'Byre') and provide both shower facilities, a drying room and more bed spaces! Much needed & much appreciated improvements! *Pete Kos*

access

Walkers have been advised to call the police if they are intimidated or threatened by landowners. Andrea Partridge, Access Officer for the MCofS, said walkers should make a note of the time and location of the incident, individual's names and vehicle registration numbers – for more info email access@mcofs.org.uk

First thoughts

Dave Paterson was a valued member of Red Rope Scotland East. He died suddenly and unexpectedly in May 2013. His hallmarks were his sense of humour, strength of character, generosity of spirit, strong conviction for living in line with his principles, and the passion that he had for the hills of Scotland. Here is a collection of some very happy memories of our times with Dave.

The man on a mission

All of us have memories of Dave's fiery determination to get up hills whenever possible. His other commitments meant that he would often turn up very late on the Friday night of a weekend trip, and then be off at dawn to shoot off up a string of Munros on his own. A whisky-fuelled Saturday night would follow, with Dave energetically debating the ills of society under the Tories and his outrage about the 2014 SNP referendum. He would still manage to leave at the crack of dawn on the Sunday to, "bag a couple more on the way back to Stoney".

The man of principle

No-one was ever left in any doubt about Dave's beliefs in the 'right to roam'. On a trip to Nethy Bridge, a group of us had descended from Meall a'Bhuachaille, finding ourselves beside a house where we were accosted by a man telling us we should not be on his land. Dave struck up a conversation with him and then deliberately strode off across his land, despite this being the wrong direction!

The rest of us picked up the right path and returned to the hut. We were sitting beside the fire when Dave turned up later after a much longer walk, having retained the moral high ground.

The man who loved his food

A great benefit of Red Rope trips is the 'permission' to eat lots of calories. Dave loved deserts. In autumn 2012 we had a trip to the Steall Hut in Glen Nevis, which can only be reached by walking up the valley and crossing the River Nevis on a metal 'tight-rope' bridge. Dave appeared very late, having crossed the bridge in the dark, balancing cream, meringues and strawberries. He constructed the pudding by candlelight and then produced a bottle of whisky to wash it down.

The man who looked out for others

Dave was very generous, financially and in spirit. As one of the drivers he would, quite literally, go the extra mile for others, giving people lifts to places that were well out of his way. He would often sacrifice his grand Munro-bagging plans for the good of others, doing low level walks with new members who weren't confident. There were many more examples of Dave's thoughtful nature.

Final thoughts

These are just some of our memories of Dave. All of them are full of energy, passion, positivity and good humour. We all miss his companionship and hold him in our thoughts when we are out in the mountains where he loved to be.

Rope Scotland East





a breath of fresh air: rr east anglia's first trip

The first residential weekend organised jointly by the new Red Rope East Anglia branch and the Leicester region was a big success. The event was fully booked, people attracted by the beautiful north Norfolk coast with its various landscapes and wild life. Despite a dire weather forecast, Norfolk didn't disappoint and the walks were fantastic – aided by the marvellous coastal hopper bus to take us home at the end of the day when we returned to a rather lovely 'bunk barn'.

As Howard says: "Had a great weekend at Burnham Deepdale. The efficient organisation meant that everything went smoothly. Met some interesting people and loved the coast walks. I found the length of the walks suited me. I volunteered to make the custard. No lumps were reported!"

Other Norfolk first-timers said how nice it was to meet RR members from Leicester, London and beyond and everyone enjoyed the walks (to Wells, Brancaster and Hunstanton), chatting in the bunkhouse, card games and the excellent food. A big thank you to all who came and helped to make our first trip so successful. Hopefully, this is an experience the branch can build upon and more weekend trips can be organised in the future.

Alice Lyons and Howard Templeton

and a quick report from the regional contact:

.....Our new regional group is going well. We now have eleven – (or is it more?) – members and on our January walk we had a record 23 people (including our two junior walkers), and Billy the dog. We hope some more of our regular walkers will join RR soon. We have enjoyed a walk every month bar one since setting up the group in March 2013 (in July the extreme Norfolk heat led us to cancel!), and several of our new members have enjoyed their first weekend trip (see above). We also have a Red Rope East Anglia Facebook page where you can see some more photos of our walks and trip and which is kept updated with news of what we are doing. By the time you read this our new season's programme of walks (on the second Sunday of each month) should have appeared in the MIS. So, hope to see you on a walk soon!

Sarah Bates: eastanglia@redrope.org.uk



london's new year trip jonathan bridge

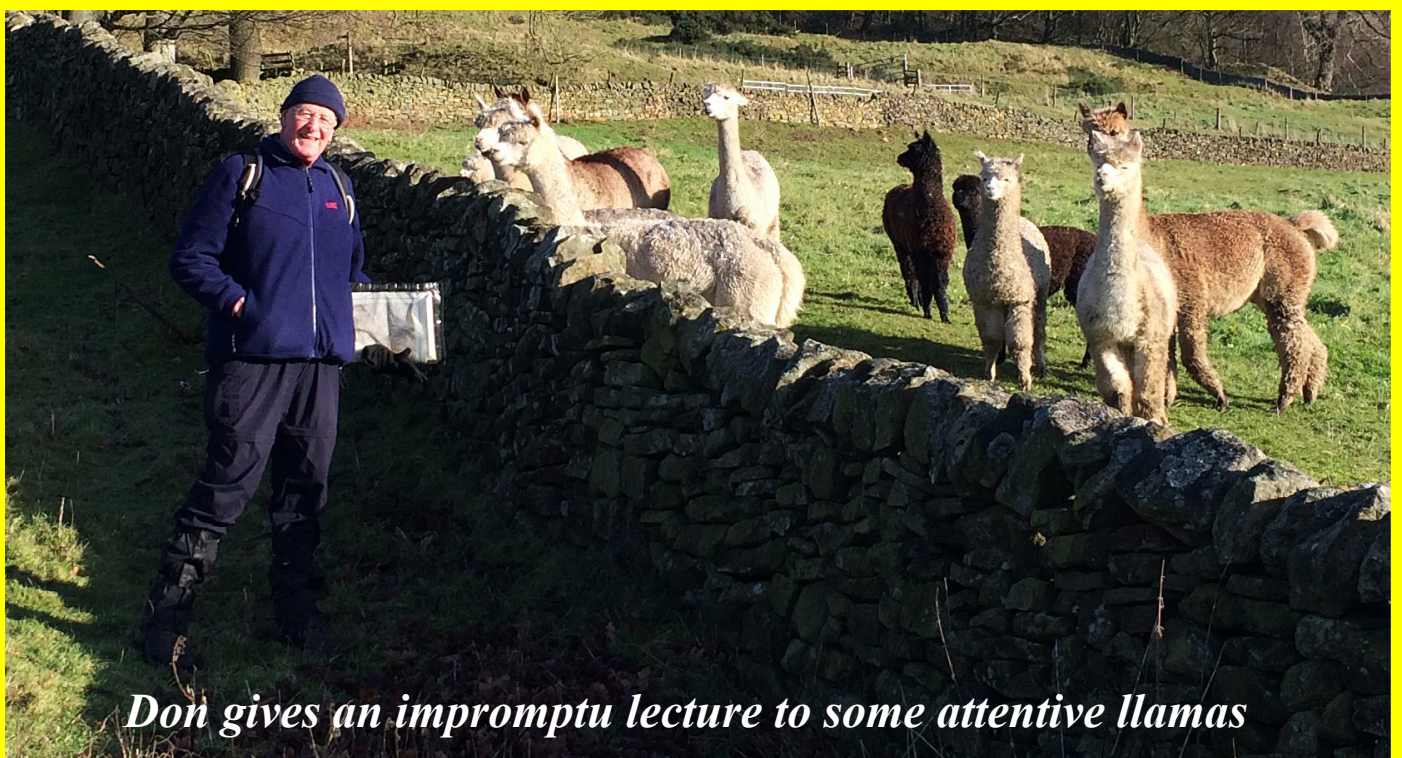


London RR's New Year trip to Carlswark Cottage, Stoney Middleton, near Eyam, Derbyshire.

You can't beat a cosy hut not a mile away from a plague-ridden village. Well, the plague was quite a long time ago, and as for our hut, once you ignored the dripping upstairs walls, learned to fumble with the key for the outside loo (there was just one inside for the single dorm) and how to squeeze 12 folk plus 2 occasional guests round some diminutive dinner tables, everything was hunky dory, or should I say hunky snory! The wood burning stove was the saving grace, and indeed Grace saved it. The rain came and went.

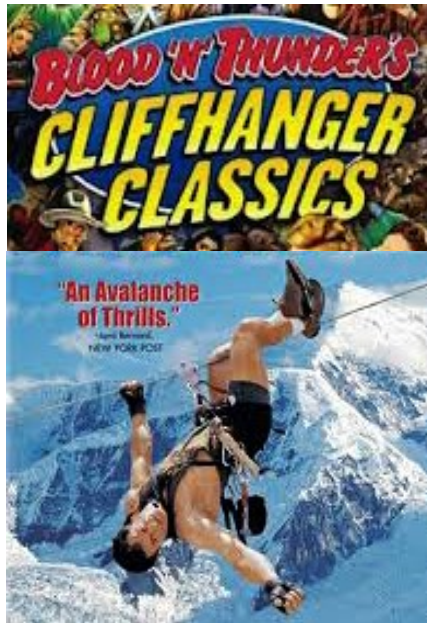
Oddly, one highlight was the rainiest day of all. Most of us zoomed off to Wakefield to see the town's favourite daughter Barbara Hepworth's spanking new brutalist-style museum poised dramatically over a weir. And then to the Yorkshire sculpture park where a condemned flat from south London had been lined with blue spiky crystals, detached, hauled up the motorway and painstakingly re-erected. Both venues with free entry — apart from the car parks!

Oh...walks. We did a few. The last day in particular was remarkable for the effort some of us took to climb an interminable gully above Edale, only to find it was the wrong gully! Note to aficionados: the railway carriage cafe at Edale is no longer a railway carriage and no longer serves tea in pint mugs. Sic gloria transit. Thanks to Pam for impeccable organising and to Humphrey for grappling with the labyrinthine transport rules while fighting pain from a troublesome wisdom tooth. **JB**



Don gives an impromptu lecture to some attentive llamas

humphrey and dermot go dotty in the dollies



big mose basecamp

Dermot and I spent 2 weeks in early August in the Dolomites in NE Italy. The area was part of Austria until the end of WW1 and is still bilingual. On the first day we walked from Bressanone/Brixen to the Rifugio Genova where we met up with fellow Red Roper Steve Wright. The next day we did our first and very easy *via ferrata* — scrambling attached to wire cables. The following day we did a harder VF from a different hut, ascending Sass Rigais. We said goodbye to Steve a few days later at the Gardena pass, then headed up into the Sella Group and Piz Boe — not great for greenery, but with stunning rock formations. So far we had been heading broadly south on the Alta Via 2 but from Piz Boe we turned east on the little known (and un-signed) AV9, meeting up with Barbara Segal and David Symonds at the Pralongia hut — which has great food — and walking with them to spend two nights at the beautifully situated Rifugio Scotoni. We then spent a day looking at the relics of the First World War above the Passo di Falzarego. The Austrian lines followed a summit ridge far above the pass and Dermot and I descended an extraordinary tunnel the Italians had built through the rock so that they could explode a vast mine beneath the Austrians. Thousands died here, as much from winter conditions as from the fighting.

Dermot and I then travelled via Cortina and two consecutive cable cars to a hut sitting on the summit ridge of Monte Cristallo. Staying at that hut let us spend the following day doing our longest VF, a descending traverse of the mountain. We were surprised that we were the only people staying at the hut but it turned out everyone else had seen the weather forecast! Being on a mountain top attached to a thick metal cable is a *really* bad idea in a thunderstorm, but it proved to be a question of taking shelter below the crest while massive thunder clouds passed over. Still, the photo (right) looks more like Sam running into Mordor than Dermot on a suspension bridge over a chasm on that summit ridge, as featured in 'Cliffhanger' with Sylvester Stallone! Our tour of the Dolomites ended on a slightly odd little railway running east-west along the valley between the Dolomites and the main range of the alps, passing through Italy but really beginning and ending in Austria — a relic of the pre-1914 boundaries. **Humphrey Southall** (more on London RR blog)



David adds: Barbara and I continued on the AV9 to the Tre Cime (opposite, top right) possibly the most spectacular area in the Dolomites. At the bottom of the photo you can see a very straightforward path. Most of the walking isn't technically challenging. The huts are good - it's quite a lot cheaper if you stay in dorms rather than 2 person rooms. Recommended! NB It has recently been revealed that rumours that Dermot was Stallone's stunt double are unfounded.

the shropshire agm: a summary by adrian jones



We now have 300 plus members and two new regions - East Anglia and Northampton. The club finances are healthy and there is no need to review membership charges at present. The publicity officer has improved our posters and national leaflet. We were awarded £350 by the BMC for the website and for newsletters. In the spring a developer was contracted to undertake work on the website. Early progress was good, see <http://dev.redrope.org.uk/>. However, the developer had to withdraw and unfortunately a new developer now needs to be found to complete the task. This is obviously disappointing.

Motions: A London motion proposing a refund of 50% on trip bookings cancelled within 28 days of the start of the trip was voted against. Existing arrangements stand i.e. no refunds!

Charges for public transport users on national trips: members pay the cost of their ticket which will then be adjusted by their income band, as follows: A band – reimbursement of 50% of ticket cost/
E band - no adjustment/ H band – payment of 54% of ticket cost. Other bands - pro rata. Motion carried.

Discussions: A reduction in the number of bands to say 5, and a new top band aimed at high earners was discussed. The NC will bring specific proposals to the next AGM. There was a lengthy discussion on ways of encouraging members to take on positions of responsibility in their regions. A discussion on a lower membership fee for infirm, non-participatory members was inconclusive.

The weather was excellent (see photographic proof opposite!) and, apart from being shared with some hungry hornets, the accommodation was good - as was the delightful dinner, expertly organised by Gill Cox. The comedian Naomi Paul did an impressive after-dinner turn and Arthur B's quiz was much appreciated.

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) has organised 3 types of subsidised training. Firstly there are events based in mountain huts where the price includes training and accommodation. You have to organise and pay for your own transport and food. The current programme:

Navigation Skills 5-6 April, price £75
(Ingleton, Yorkshire)
Outdoor First Aid 17-18 May price, £75
(Brecon Beacons)
Self-rescue for climbers 13-14 September, £75
(Conistone, Lake District)
Outdoor First Aid 27-28 September, price £75
(Ogwen Valley, N. Wales)
Navigation 18-19 October, £75, also Ogwen.

These courses are very popular and get booked up well in advance. You have to book at www.thebmc.co.uk/club-training-courses-2014. More courses will follow in the year.

Janet Thompson at the BMC deals with any queries (janet@thebmc.co.uk). You need to know your BMC number. These courses are available to all club members irrespective of where they live in the UK.

Following a request at last year's AGM I have decided that there is insufficient demand for a club First Aid Course. At least 2 members have recently booked on a BMC First Aid course. This type of course is expensive to run and we made a loss on at previous course, which was advertised in the MIS last year and then cancelled due to lack of interest. Secondly there are 3 types of BMC sponsored courses at Plas y Brenin (PYB) the national mountain sport centre in Snowdonia: Head for the Hills, Ready to Rock (Climbing) and Scrambling Essentials.

These courses run over week-ends throughout the year. Prices vary from £80 for non-residential, £100 for bunkhouse accommodation, £120 for staying in the main accommodation block. For further details see www.pyb.co.uk. There is info about awards and bursaries on page 64 of the current PYB brochure.

Plas y Brenin administers the New Leaders Fund for walkers and climbers who wish to obtain a formal outdoor qualification, which includes Summer and Winter Mountain Leadership and the

Single Pitch Award. In April some new awards will be launched including the Lowland Leader Award and the Hill and Mountain Skills Awards (see www.lupineadventure.co.uk/hill-and-mountain-skills.html). Lupine Adventure are a worker co-operative which the club have used in the past to provide training.

To obtain any of these awards you have to have a certain amount of prior experience before registering with Mountain Training UK (see www.mltuk.org). You have to attend a course, gain more experience and then undertake a formal assessment. For the Hills and Mountain Skills awards the course is only 2 days long, although registration with Mountain Training UK training is required.

A New Leaders Fund has been set up at Plas y Brenin to offer financial support to people who wish to register for one of these awards. In return for direct financial help, the recipient has to undertake to provide training to novices and to keep a record. It is not known whether this fund will apply to the new awards due to start in April.

The subsidy depends on where you live. Different rules apply in Wales. If you live in Leicester, Nottingham, Liverpool, Lewisham or Camden you will receive 75% of the cost. People living in Sheffield, Bristol or Croydon will receive 50%. Bromley residents qualify for only 25%. The Summer Mountain Leadership training costs £467.50, so even after the grant has been paid you will have to find either £233.75, £350.62 or £116 depending on where you live.

If you are a club member living in Scotland you can apply to go on courses run by the BMC and courses run by the Mountaineering Council of Scotland (MCOFS). Club Members in England and Wales are not eligible to access MCOFS courses: www.mcofs.org.uk has details of a wide variety of good value courses on dates throughout the year. Scrambling costs £90, First Aid £90 and Navigation courses for £35. The winter skills courses appear to have been oversubscribed.

I would be keen to hear from experienced club members who want to help with training. **D Mc**

See next page for Dermot's contact details

'navigation in the mountains' by carlo forte

This book is written by the Chief Instructor at the National Mountain Centre, Plas y Brenin in North Wales. The publishers are a charity, web address **www.mltuk.org**. Revenue from the book is used to support the work of the charity. This book (164 pages) is the official navigation book for all mountain training schemes. It is Volume 4 in the Mountain Training Handbook series.

It is divided into 7 parts. Part 1 deals with the fundamentals such as map scales, different maps, map symbols, the grid system and choosing a compass. Part 2 covers setting the map, relating the map and the land, contour interpretation, linear features, distance judgement, pacing and timing, the use of the compass and relocation techniques. The latter is shorthand for what to do when you are "temporarily misplaced" or lost!

Any club member who books on a subsidised BMC course on navigation will cover Parts 1 and 2 of this book. See **www.thebmc.co.uk/club-training-courses-2014** for more details.

Unlike the Peter Cliff book on navigation, Carlo Forte uses excellent colour diagrams and photos throughout his work. For example there is a useful page with 2 colour diagrams that show what ridges, saddles, knolls and re-entrants look like on the map, and colour photos of the same features. (A re-entrant appears on the contour lines as a U or V shape, pointing back into a hillside rather than sticking out of the hill.)

Part 3 deals with how to navigate in winter. Part 4 has some useful tips about navigating abroad and finding direction without a compass. Parts 5 and 6 cover global positioning systems and digital mapping software.

Part 7 deals with teaching navigation. There are also regular notes throughout the book for navigation instructors, who are encouraged to communicate with learners by demonstrating for visual input, explaining for audio input and by an activity for kinaesthetic input. When teaching navigation, instructors should appreciate that individuals learn in different ways. As the club has many experienced members, perhaps the time is due for a debate about how to teach navigation techniques.

The 5 appendices cover details of the mountain training awards, national navigation award schemes, orienteering, access legislation and a bibliography.

Some club members may feel that the book is expensive. There *are* free navigation resources on the internet. Check out the websites for the Ordnance Survey and Lupine Adventures. Glenmore Lodge, a national outdoor training centre, has produced a series of you-tube videos on all aspects of mountaineering. The BMC has recently produced a 14 page leaflet for New Hill Walkers. This can be downloaded for free at **www.bmcshop.co.uk**. (Please let me know about any other free navigation resources.)

This book is to be recommended for club members who want to develop or consolidate their navigation skills, or who are interested in either obtaining a formal mountain leadership qualification or who want to pass on their skills to less experienced colleagues.

'Navigation in the Mountains' by Carlo Forte
pub. Mountain Training United Kingdom, £15.99

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View from Moel Sych in the Berwyns

trip charges

andy bateman

I attended the AGM this year and the debate about trip charges saddened and depressed me. Very few contributions were made that made any direct reference to what trip charges are for, or referred to any ethical/political criteria which might be used to decide how they should be fixed. Instead the debate was largely about how different pricing structures might impact on member behaviour and how a price structure might be devised to influence members to behave properly.

This suggests to me that we have lost sight of the traditions which once informed our decisions and it might be timely to remind us all of where we came from and what we stand (or once stood) for. Here goes then - I will be brief but am ready to expand on this historical account to anyone who emails questions or challenges.

In our beginnings we were a minibus based organisation in London. We cooked collectively and paid for each trip equally, dividing costs on a trip by trip basis. Simple, like any group of friends, not particularly socialist in any way. However quite early on we had one or two members who couldn't afford to attend. A trip meeting would decide to subsidise these members, but on a trip by trip basis. One might be helped but had no right to expect it. Help came from a decision of the individuals present at the time. We were like a family or a charity.

Qualitative change came when at one of these trip meetings an uncomfortable beneficiary asked "that's great, thanks, but why are you doing this?" The answer, "because we like you" did not satisfy her. She said "that's great, but I would like to be able to come and be subsidised whether you like me or not". This silenced the meeting. Subsequently heads were scratched and a solution sought.

The fixed price banding system we use today emerged from this. This is the point at which we began to manage our financial relationships in a recognisably socialist way. Red Rope became a partial expression of the principle "from each according to his means, to each according to his needs". We embarked on a relationship with each other through Red Rope that had continuity, through consistent charging and cross subsidy from one trip to another, and that saw each of us relating to all of us as equals whether popular or unpopular (for which I thank my stars every day!).

I pause here to remind us all of how special this is. The relatively wealthy within Red Rope (I know of nobody rich in our organisation) regularly pay substantial sums so they can enjoy the company of their less well off comrades on as equal a basis as possible. This is something wonderful. We value, trust and respect each other sufficiently to be willing to pay extra when we are well off, and accept subsidy when we are badly off. This is no mean achievement in a society so atomised and competitive.

However the establishment of fixed prices holds a danger. All prices in capitalist society hide relationship in the abstraction of exchange value. Our unique commitment to each other, once it has been expressed as a cash price, can be reduced to a commodity like any other, losing its particularity and becoming comparable to any other "leisure product" through its cash value. That's alienation - what we have made being taken away from us and sold back to us, by us, as something other. The moment we put a price on our trips we stood at the top of a slippery slope to commodification.

We have done well to come so far without being severely damaged by this. However, as socialism inside Red Rope has come to mean less and less with the cumulative defeats of the left since the early 1980s we have become less and less a politically active organisation and less and less an organisation of political activists.

More and more now we don't appeal to the political commitment of our members, we try to influence their behaviour through their pockets, like some Tory chancellor trying to shore up marriage with tax allowances. An example of this from today's sad meeting was the discussion on trip deposits and hardships associated with their retention post cancellation. It was suggested that we retain only half of trip deposits when members cancel inside the 28 day limit "because it caused hardships" to retain all the deposit, and that we do this in all circumstances. A member challenged this pointing out that real emergencies may force cancellations in circumstances where we should return deposits. When she was able to make herself understood to be proposing that we should decide each case on its merits there was open laughter - many people cynically thinking that trip organisers and others will be pressurised and give in to that pressure if we don't have a completely rigid policy. So here is an open appeal to members. If you want Red Rope to stay healthy and harmonious, adopt the following guidelines for your own behaviour:

- Reject all policies that allow two members with the same income on the same trip travelling the same distance to make radically different contributions, because it goes so much against our egalitarian traditions it destroys them (rescind the public transport rates just agreed at the next AGM for example).
- Limit the use of prices as a control on behaviour to the absolute minimum.
- Rely less on rules and more on principles of equality and fairness

directly challenge those who you believe abuse the system (for example I once attended a trip where the trip treasurer directly challenged a member who notoriously and habitually misrepresented their band, by checking though each member's band assessment when making the financial settlement - the member's behaviour changed from that point.)

- Recognise that for various reasons some members will always feel the need to take advantage of others, and that this is often a worthwhile price to pay for being part of a collective group like Red Rope. Let your solidarity trump your outrage as often as you can.
- If you are looking for perfect socialism, fight for it in broader society, not Red Rope. Red Rope is full of flawed individuals living in a sickening competitive society and constantly influenced by it.
- When you are considering issues of financial organisation in Red Rope remember that sharing, equality and fairness in our financial relationships needs to come before personal advantage - for example if one of us can get a cheap ticket to a trip venue all should benefit from the saving, not just that person.



shared meals and shrove tuesday

One of the joys of a Red Rope trip is the opportunity for shared cooking and eating. Shrove Tuesday fell during the last national Scottish mountain winter trip to Lagangardh and we decided to acknowledge this by cooking pancakes. The first pancake was something of a disaster. This was because I was mathematically challenged by multiplying the quantities for my batter recipe up to an amount suitable for 14 people. However, Julian came to my aid by not bothering with the maths and adding flour until the mixture looked about right!

We quickly had 3 pans on the go and volunteers to cook the first pancakes while others eagerly awaited the results. Prav Patel and Sarah Bates proved to be the most expert pancake makers, but having watched the experts there was a steady stream of volunteers eager to try their hand. Inexperienced pancake makers learnt that 'less' is often 'more' when it comes to making a quality pancake and a few rather stodgy attempts found their way into the bin. Soon the kitchen was full of 'tossers'; then Humphrey tossed too early. Eventually everyone had satiated their appetite both for cooking and eating pancakes. There was a minimal amount of mess on the floor and luckily no pancakes on the ceiling.

If you have never been on a Red Rope trip one of the best aspects is the communal cooking and eating of meals. I recommend that you give it a try if you have not done so before and who knows what skills you may pick up!

Anne Silber Bristol & SW Region





Photos from the Bristol RR Easter 2013 trip to Patterdale, Ullswater. Top left, Angle Tarn.

