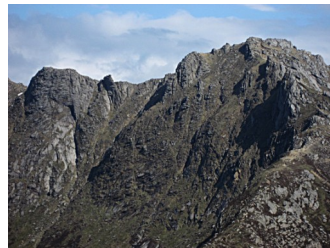


red rope bulletin 25 *autumn 2013*



*the whitsun arran trip/ red rope in east anglia/
the shropshire agm/ the national huts of scotland/
tributes to arthur howarth and eddie barns*

red rope: the socialist walking and climbing club

arran: comrades go cuckoo in corrie

Had one been at the Corrie Bunkhouse on the first Saturday of Red Rope's Isle of Arran excursion at the end of May, one might have observed an arthritic black labrador - clearly not a running dog of capitalism - being wheeled up the precipitous hill in a trailer pushed by 4 panting adults while a fifth walked behind carrying the said animal's basket; the sort of regal treatment not perhaps entirely anticipated for a socialist organisation. But then I'd spent most of the decade between this trip and my previous RR outings in the peculiarly materialist, supposedly communist China, so I understood that things are not always what they seem.

On the first night my colleague Comrade Olya - anxious to ensure that I was not left out of activities but aware that an early start to her was like a red rag to a sloth - volunteered me for a climbing party that was heading up a nearby ridge at 8am the next day. Having neither climbing experience nor equipment, this assault must have looked at times like the rushes for the movie *Mind the Drop*, *Mr Bean*, and I'm grateful in particular to Steve, Pravin and Chris for getting me down in the same number of pieces that I went up. [212]

With weather forecasts fluctuating, groups and activities developed on an ad hoc basis over the next few days, and people were free to do their own thing or somebody else's, as their whimsy took them. Adrian adopted the role of Uncas, setting out on prodigious, usually solitary, scouting missions to assess the quality of various footpaths, heritage sites and tea shops for others to explore in his wake.

There were plenty of options for devotees of various gods as well as mammon - a couple of Bhuddist Centres, standing stones, chapels, breweries, distilleries and cheese shops, not to mention historical geological structures which contributed to ground-breaking conclusions about the age of the Earth by Hutton (the 18th Century one who contemplated a rock, not the 21st century one who contemplated Iraq). The more cultured of our number also trolled along to a production of a musical comedy *The Steamie*, the highlight of which was the leading actress falling off the stage - regrettably no-one had the foresight to film it for *You've Been Framed*.

Artwork: David Symonds

Front cover photos: Rob Steel and Laura Neechi-Ghiri





We, in turn, provided our own form of public entertainment as Nigel and Damian improvised a lecture on the causes of the Russian Revolution from the bus shelter at Lochranza, to the delight of tourists and locals alike, who generally seemed to decide that they might not need to catch the bus after all!

Meanwhile the number of cuckoos heard all over Arran suggested that David Blunkett, Boris Johnson and the Duke of Edinburgh might all be holidaying on the island as well.

Considerable excitement was aroused by the sight of a submarine just off the north of the island - apparently it's where submarine training is often conducted ("When I strike my hand on the dashboard like this I want you to imagine that a baby seal has swum in front of the vessel...")

The bunkhouse would probably win no design awards. The men's dorm was particularly snug, not to say cramped. The hut's location lacked in accessibility what it made up for in sea view and tranquility, but all in all it provided a satisfactory base to start and end the day — the collection of exploding Pyrex dishes proving an unusual source of entertainment, as did the kilted bunkhouse owner and his lookalike bearded lurcher, when they eventually showed up.

One evening we discussed a radio report saying that those with below-average looks earn 20% less than folk with conventional faces — a glance around the bunkhouse might have prompted fears that this trip had more than its fair share of Band A's and was about to incur a substantial deficit, but thanks particularly to the tenacious food management of Pauline - evidently not just a pretty face - statistician Barbara was able to report that we'd brought the trip in close to budget. A debt of thanks was owed to Prav on the last night for a terrific vegetarian curry from assorted leftovers, and to our doughty organiser, Dermot, for successfully juggling what seemed like an ever changing set of bookings.

Mike Shearer

Trip Organiser's Pack

The Trip Organiser's Pack is being revised to include new guidelines on transport, updated food list & rates for non-members on National Trips. (Travel at E band, with overnight stay at E + 50%.)

Membership

There are now 302 members. It does seem that there has been some decline in membership, albeit not too great. We have successfully transferred most members with email addresses so they receive MIS by email which is helping to reduce postage costs.

Training

Dermot McKibbin has become Training Officer. A broad training programme is planned to start in spring 2014. Send ideas to Dermot at: training@redrope.org.uk

Club Gear

It is believed that much of the club equipment in store is obsolete and may not be safe to use. It may need to be disposed of as being of little or no practical use.

Archive

Much of the Club archive material has now been taken to the Working Class Museum, Manchester, where it will form part of their collection.

New Red Rope Website

The specification phase is complete and the task of development handed over to a commercial developer (selected by competitive tender). The charge for this is \$600. An early version of the developer's work is can be seen at <http://stewie.med.yale.edu:8888/>. Greennet has been selected as the preferred ISP.

Club Hut

The fitting out work is progressing well. However, there is still work to be carried out so it is unlikely the hut will be ready to use until 2014.

Shropshire AGM: Sept. 27–29, 2013

The 'Big Mose' cottage and bunkhouse, the National Trust Dudmaston Estate, just south of Bridgnorth in Shropshire (near Quatford) **WV15 6QR**. The cottage is about 1 mile NE of Dudmaston Hall. Saturday night shindig: meal, quiz and Sock Exchange. Please bring unwanted clothes and gear. AGM Sunday morning. Camping! Details in MIS. Forms on website.

Grid ref: 138:SO756901

Trip Transport Charges

The ratio of transport charges between different bands is to be adjusted, to bring them into line with the overnight charge band ratios.

Banding

Banding to be reduced to 5 bands for simplicity. This is to be taken as a proposal to the AGM. The club's finances are in a reasonably healthy state.

Adrian Jones

nc may manchester

wide skies

As a member of RR (and long distant affiliate of the Leicester Region) I have, for 10 years, enjoyed many trips organised nationally or by other regions. Other interested friends and I decided it was time to fill a gap and set up an East Anglian regional group with the aims of getting out and enjoying our own area more, making new friends and organising trips further away.

RR East Anglia members are, currently, all based in Norwich but the group will welcome any interested walkers or climbers from Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge-shire and around. We aim to arrange a day/half-day walk once a month (every second Sunday) with additional/occasional evening walks planned for the summer. Walks will range from 5-15km. They are likely to be in Norfolk and Suffolk although, depending on who joins us, we may venture further afield, acoast or afen. We have amazing coastal landscapes, some beautiful countryside, several long-distant footpaths and lovely riverside walks. And, contrary to popular belief, it's not all flat around here.

There are several climbing walls in the area and we hope to welcome a climbing contingent. We are keen to organise or join trips to other regions and higher altitudes and will arrange an occasional pub, or other, 'Social'.

Our first walk took place on an arctic Sunday afternoon in March and included Upgate and Alderford Commons (both very lovely and neither of which I had visited before) and part of the Marriots Way long distance footpath. Our treasurer Heather Wallis led the second walk in the Yare Valley and in May we walked from South Walsham Broad, along the banks of the Bure past boats, wind-pumps, grazing marshes and alder carr. Our June walk, led by Julia, included viewing the rhododendrons, azaleas and handkerchief tree at Sheringham Park, skylarks and thrift on a cliff-top stroll, a picnic on the beach at Weybourne and native bluebells on Kelling Heath – not to mention the North Norfolk railway steam trains in action.

We are now planning our next walks, and, jointly with Leicester Region, a weekend in North Norfolk in the autumn – so if you fancy wide open sandy beaches, salt marshes, big skies and cosy pubs - watch this space (or rather the MIS!)

If you have any friends in the east who you think may be interested in joining RR for local walks/trips/climbing please do let them know about our new group and tell them to get in touch with me via the Local Groups page on the RR website or the MIS. The more members we have in the region the easier it will be for us to arrange and join other trips. And, if you happen to be visiting the area, do get in touch and join us on a walk.

Photos next page, bottom right.

Sarah Bates,
Red Rope East Anglia regional contact.

rip off britain

These cartoons are from a series by Rod Green. Rod has worked at Norwich Art School and is now a free-lance cartoonist and graphic designer.
Email: r.green450@btinternet.com



tents, towyn and trigg

jan lancaster



The day dawned sunny and bright, when Manchester Red Rope set off on 15 June for the annual camping trip to North Wales. This year we were going to the Llyn Peninsula with 2 camper vans, 7 teenagers, 3 children under 6 and a varied bag of adults – 21 in total plus black Labrador Guide Dog Puppy, Trigg. We arrived first so after a walk, a visit to the beach and dinner in the pub, it was time to start erecting tents.

By 7pm, the wind has risen, and the skies darkened as the others began to arrive. Hanging onto my tent for dear life as Richard, Julia and family arrived was the start of a very special Friday night. In the pouring rain, with a gale blowing, we together put up 5 tents, including the large "Paul L. Memorial Tent" which is our communal home.

Initially we tried to erect it inside out. But wet through and exhausted we had, by 9:30pm, managed everyone's tent (although some of us retired before we realized that Paul's was still in its bag!) Cold, wet and decidedly downhearted we retired to our respective canvas homes.

We woke in the early morning with the sun shining through the tent windows - a beautiful day on the peninsula. Breakfast al fresco, continuous coffee and tea and somehow the events of the night before disappeared from view. 7 plus dog went hiking along the headland for several miles; children built endless castles on the beach, teenagers played games and of course, visited the local shops!

Sean, as always, came into his own with three barbeque pits, where he expertly juggled chicken pieces, burgers, veg and non-veg sausages complemented with salads and wine under a blue sky. The evening ended with a trip to the beach to watch the sun setting. And so to bed.

Sunday: clear up day and visit to the beach again. Watching Trigg tearing up and down the beach with another dog, digging in the sand "helping" the children dig a humungous hole, is to see happiness on 4 legs. What a weekend he had.

One by one the cars and campers departed after a superb weekend full of incidents and excitements. While it had not been my intention to add to that, I did so in a spectacular manner by hitting the central reservation some miles outside Manchester, at a rate of knots, spinning around and facing oncoming traffic. I am relieved to say, that I survived (but my car did not) with a cracked ribs, much bruising and a minor fracture in the ankle.

Tragically my beautiful dog and friend died as a result of his injuries on route to the vet's. He was very kindly rescued by two strangers who stopped and phoned the police and ambulance on my behalf.

Trigg is missed by many here in Manchester and a donation was agreed at the recent Manchester AGM to be sent to Guide Dogs in his memory. Finally, a public thanks to all my Red Rope friends for their support and friendship during this difficult time for me - another proof of our amazing club.

Jan Lancaster



The Mountaineering Council of Scotland promotes Scottish mountaineering and encourages the development of the hut network. There are over twenty club huts with many in the heart of the Scottish mountains: Strawberry Cottage in remote Glen Affric, Lagangarbh at the foot of Buachaille Etive Mor, the Ling hut opposite Liathach and Naismith with its view of Suilven. The buildings are often attractively converted and it is surprising how much is fitted into a small space. All the huts are set up for groups so there is no hunting around for large pans or moving of ornaments to make space for maps!

Mill Cottage in the Cairngorms, the Glen Brittle Memorial Hut on Skye and the Alex Macintyre Hut in Glencoe are 'Scottish National Huts' owned by the MC of S and managed through trusts. These three huts are a little more comfortable, and spacious, and we have trips coming up at all three.

They are also available for bookings by individual members/affiliated members of the MC of S subject to proof of membership and there being places available. This means that members of Red Rope are entitled to make individual bookings. Other huts are also available for individual bookings, particularly mid-week: <http://www.mcofs.org.uk/assets/huts>

Our next trip to a Scottish National Hut is in February to the Alex Mac. This hut was bought by the BMC and the MC of S and is held in trust on behalf of their members. It is named after a young mountaineer killed by a rockfall during an attempt on a new route on the south face of Annapurna in 1982. It is a converted cottage in North Ballachulish, Glencoe, sleeping 16 people over 5 bedrooms on alpine style sleeping platforms, single beds and bunks. All rooms have heaters, the kitchen is well equipped and the showers good. There is an efficient drying room and the hut is warm and cosy. The beautiful views over Loch Linnhe from the lounge give the hut a holiday cottage feel, especially when the sun shines. There is parking behind the building and the hut is on a bus route. The Ballachulish Horseshoe, the Mamores and Glencoe offer the closest mountain routes and will easily fill a week or fortnight at the Alex Mac.

Just up the road at Onich ferries run to the Adnamurchan peninsula with foot passengers and cyclists travelling for free. The quiet roads are just right for a relaxing day on the bike. Further afield are the Ben Nevis range to the north and

Ben Cruachan and Oban to the south. From Oban you can take a ferry to Kerrera, an island with colourful shells, a castle, tea garden and bunk-house. The Alex Mac is sometimes used as a stop-off for mountaineers travelling further north.

Arthur Howarth was booking secretary for the Alex Mac for many years and was proud of its development; Red Rope will soon be installing a framed map in the hut in his memory. Arthur introduced Sherry MacIver to hut wardening at the Alex Mac over the last few years and Sherry has now taken over his role. To book places - check availability on the website then contact Sherry at **ammh@mcofs.org.uk** for confirmation and the door code - no keys to lose! Beds are £8.50 pppn with payment of 50% required in advance. Online booking is due to be introduced this year.

Trips booked for 2014:

Alex Mac: 5 nights plus Lagangarbh: 2 nights, Glencoe - 15th to 21st February. All levels of winter walking.

CIC, Ben Nevis - 9th to 14th February. Winter mountaineering trip.

Glen Brittle, Skye - May 17th to 24th. Walking, scrambling, climbing. Organiser needed.

Naismith, Elphin - May 24th to 31st. Long walks in the remote North West. See MIS for details.

Overnight charges will stay the same next year. Trip organisers are reminded to apply a multiplier if hut costs are above £10. A review of the Trip Organisers Pack and transport charges is almost complete.

Becky Bates National Trips Secretary

bulletin@redrope.org.uk

Once again, many thanks to all contributors. As a title for an article 'What's Your Favorite Jam?' will obviously take some beating! However, your chance has arrived as the next bulletin - deadline January 31 - will feature trip-friendly recipes. Send in your ideas for tasty tuck! Bear in mind that one column equals about 350 words and photos are helpful; other material is very welcome.

My front cover illustration is based on a painting by the English artist Kurt Jackson. If you like gutsy coastal scenes check him out.

Happy trails,

David Symonds

!west midlands on tour!

Thirteen intrepid (?) Red Ropers set out to explore the Rhinog range on a West Midlands trip this May. The weather on higher ground was awful (gales, hail, snow) so the plan had to change!

Friday We caught the train to Llanbedr station from Barmouth and headed gradually uphill through the village and then woods to join the Ardudwy Way heading south. Great views back to the coast and of surrounding moorlands and dry stone walled sheep-folds. As we walked the mist descended. At Pont Fadog we discussed our options and the more intrepid group opted to climb back up into the mist, which cleared as they began their descent, rewarding them with spectacular views over the Mawddach Estuary and mountains beyond.

The second group took a very pretty path down a steep wooded valley into Tal Y Bont and from there onto the beach to walk back to Barmouth. The sea was wild and the sun even came out! From Barmouth we drove on to our next hostel at Llyn Trawsfynydd which was comfortable and well equipped.

Saturday One group walked from Llanbedr but this time north along the Ardudwy Way, peeling off to walk back to Trawsfynydd - a challenging walk, entailing lots of bog negotiation. Another group walked 10 miles around Llyn Trawsfynydd, a man-made reservoir created in the 1920s. The views of the Moelwyn, Arenig and Rhinog mountains were excellent. We also went to see the Roman remains at Tomen y Mur and thought sympathetically of those Roman soldiers, used to the warmth and sun of Italy, garrisoned in this bleak and windswept outpost. Despite experiencing hail, heavy rain, light rain, sun and thunder we had a great day.

Sunday One lone adventurer, being an experienced and expert mountain walker set out to walk 14.5 miles to Bryn Gwynant Youth Hostel. As she walked the rain set in and continued relentlessly for the next six hours! The rest of us softies took various options combining walking and buses.

Monday Our last morning and finally the sun was shining! One group walked to Aber Glaslyn Falls and picnicked on the shores of the river. The other group took the slightly shorter option of walking into Porthmadoc via the new LMC hut under construction, just outside Beddgelert, which was very impressive. Then sadly time to return home.

Highlights: Superb food, organised by Gill and Liz.

Bryn Gwynant youth hostel: what a welcome sight on a cold and wet evening! It's a huge Victorian mansion on the shores of Llyn Gwynant with vast picture windows overlooking Snowdon, truly stunning views and a toasty drying room! Many thanks to everyone who worked together to make the trip run smoothly, even if one cynic did comment that herding cats may have been easier - miaow!

Fiona Scanlan

what's your favourite jam?

The Red Rope Patterdale trip on the first weekend of September 2012 had the good fortune to enjoy weather that was as near as we can expect to "summer" these days. The wind was less than gale-force and it only rained *some* of the time...

For those who've never been, the George Starkey hut sits at the southern end of Ullswater and, aside from being large, well-equipped and comfortable, is perfectly positioned for a multitude of walks, climbs, scrambles, swims and picnics to suit every ability and enthusiasm.

The trip was unusual in that we were joined by a person new to the club who'd never been up a mountain before but was very keen to try. Naturally, to break her in gently, we took her for a drizzly scramble up the Pinnacle Ridge on St. Sunday Crag. There were wobbles and a few moments of self-doubt en route but with a confidence rope for the tricky bits (and a leg up for the long steps) the summit was attained and, fired up for more, her second peak the subsequent day was the Helvellyn Horseshoe via Striding Edge.

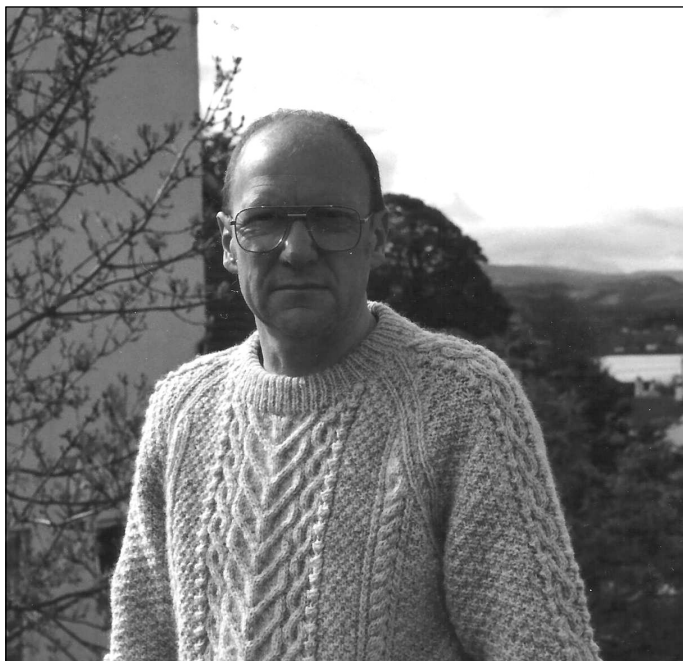
Of course, the club isn't just about the day out on the hills, but the social evening in the hut afterwards. A tummy full of curry and dhal with a glass of wine in hand is a wonderfully relaxing way to round things off. While trips provide an occasion to catch up with old friends, they also provide a golden opportunity for cementing new members into place; all clubs need to attract new blood and cover new ground in order to prosper. When the Patterdale post-dinner conversation rolled round to another debate about the minutiae of Red Rope's trip food purchasing policy, it wasn't just the potential new members' eyes that glazed over...

The question: "What's your favourite jam?" has proved to be a wonderful device for redirecting conversations back to a more sociable vein. Jam, it turns out, is a subject that, while being totally uncontroversial, is also one that more or less everyone has an opinion about: blackcurrant for some; raspberry for others. But is that with or without the seeds removed?

While deliberation regarding the relative merits of a variety of fruit-based preserves is light-hearted enough, the point is a serious one. The club is gaining in maturity and the only tactic for recruitment seems to be word of mouth, if the current dead-in-the-water website is discounted. But it's not sufficient to entice folk to join: we have to retain them as well. I know from the many fantastic trips I've been on that our members are more than capable of making a new person feel at home and, quite literally, show them the ropes. So the next time you're on a trip and there's an unfamiliar face at the dinner table, leave the food purchase policy debate for the AGM. You're now equipped with the perfect ice-breaking question, and in case anyone's wondering, mine is apricot.

Simon Skerritt

eddie barns - a life to celebrate



At a memorial gathering called by Kent Refugee Help in June moving tributes were paid to Eddie Barns, a long-standing Red Rope member who died in March, aged 63, after a long illness. A working-class Dagenham lad and life-long West Ham fan, Eddie never forgot his roots, dedicating his life as a socialist to fighting oppression and discrimination. As a Hackney councillor in the 1980s he campaigned against Thatcher's cuts – but was still fire-hosed by Class War when it invaded the council chamber to protest against Hackney implementing government policies! Eddie also worked with Incapacity Action set up by disabled people to stop cuts in benefits.

"...a very good Englishman. I have never met the same." (T, a former detainee)

Committed to helping people struggling under the ever more draconian immigration rules Eddie was a valued member of the campaigning Hackney Refugee and Migrant Support Group and helped to set up the Hackney Migrant Centre, providing legal advice there (for free) in its first year of operation in 2009.

Alongside these activities, after he moved to Faversham Eddie became a case-worker with Kent Refugee Help, supporting and advising people held in Dover Immigration Removal Centre. A refugee explained at the memorial how Eddie's determination had won him

freedom from detention and helped him to obtain legal representation in his struggle against deportation.

"A great entertainer, the funniest man I have ever known." Pam Case

So it's not surprising that he was far too busy to go on as many Red Rope walks and trips as he would have liked. This was a great pity for us as once met Eddie was never forgotten – a kind man and a great entertainer who kept us in stitches with his rapid repartee after the day's walk. The memorial closed appropriately by meeting one of Eddie's final requests - by singing the Internationale (albeit very badly, to Billy Bragg's version...) Eddie made a difference. A comrade who is sorely missed.

Dot Lewis

Refugees who are not deported but not allowed to work often face destitution and isolation. Kent Refugee Help has set up the Eddie Barns Memorial Fund to provide emergency relief for refugees and migrants. Even very small amounts help. Contributions will be a fitting memorial to Eddie, helping to continue his work.

info@kentrefugeehelp.org.uk

Photo below by Julia Simone



NO FIXED ABODE

I GO BY THE RIVER
BROTHERS, COUSINS, FRIENDS
SOME SWIM
SOME FISH
WE HAVE FETCHED THE WATER
SWEPT THE COMPOUND
CARRIED THE WOOD

NOW WE LAUGH AND SPLASH
UNDER THE HOT SUN

THEN SOLDIERS COME
WE FLEE UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS
AND WE WALK
WE WALK FOR DAYS, WEEKS,
MONTHS

THE SNOW IS DEEP
UP TO OUR ARMPITS
SO COLD
SO HUNGRY

TURKEY, GREECE, ITALY
AND NOW A UNITED KINGDOM
WHERE FRUIT IS ON SHELVES
WRAPPED IN PLASTIC
NOT ON TREES

AT THE BUS STOP
WAIT WOMEN WITH BABIES
SOME WEAR A VEIL, SOME DO NOT
STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO EACH
OTHER
NO PROBLEM HERE

I WANT TO BE A DOCTOR
TO HELP WOMEN
I WAS FOUR WHEN MY MOTHER
DIED
GIVING BIRTH TO MY BABY SISTER

FOUR UNIVERSITIES OFFER ME A
PLACE
TO STUDY BIOCHEMISTRY
BUT IMMIGRATION CANCELS
MY LEAVE TO REMAIN
NO COUNTRY WILL KEEP ME SAFE

I WANT TO GO BY THE RIVER
SWIM, FISH
SPLASH, LAUGH

I found this poem by **Olya Bowers** very evocative. About 20,000 people arrived in the UK last year and claimed asylum.

The countries from which the highest number of asylum seekers came in recent months are Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Iran and Afghanistan. Many had been imprisoned and tortured, some had seen family members murdered. Research has shown that people are more likely to flee from countries where there is conflict than from those where there is poverty.

Under international refugee and human rights law, in order to be granted refugee status or some other form of leave to remain, you need to show that you are at risk of being persecuted for one of five reasons: political activity, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or race, and that your State is unable or unwilling to protect you.

Faced with a hostile government and media and a Home Office that is keen to find reasons to disbelieve people, it is not surprising that less than one third of asylum applicants are granted some form of protection on first decision.

While they wait for their asylum claim to be heard and then for their appeals, asylum seekers are offered basic accommodation and financial support but this is at a level well below income support. They are not allowed to work. If their appeals are all refused, except in particular circumstances (such as having children) all forms of support are stopped. Faced with the choice of returning to the country and the persecution they have escaped, many people choose to remain here.

As they are not allowed to work nor are they eligible for any benefits many become destitute. Destitute asylum seekers are at risk of violence, including sexual violence, and exploitation. As in Olya's poem, for many protection and safety prove elusive.

Debbie Singer



I was anything but Arthur's oldest friend - we met in 1997, and many in Liverpool Red Rope knew him longer. However, over the last ten years or so we were frequent mountaineering partners, partly just on club trips but also on smaller trips in Britain and to the Alps. In particular it was Arthur who got me up the most Munros before I completed them in May 2011. He was part of that rather large expedition up Ben Lomond, but a month earlier had spent three days with me just getting up a summit called Meall Buidhe in the Rough Bounds of Knoydart. He then drove a hundred miles north with me to do another in a ninety mile an hour wind – all to give a friend some company.

Arthur was the perfect bagger's companion, as he was deeply knowledgeable about the hills, and a good judge of risks, but had no agenda of his own. He went up a great many Scottish 3,000 foot mountains, with myself and with others, but had no need to keep obsessive count. He was always great company, but many of our trips began or ended with him having some simpler days by himself: he was happy to stay in hostels or even hotels, but often pined for his bivi bag, and the simplest of meals. When walking by himself he cared more for covering country and meeting interesting people than for grabbing summits.

Arthur had a rich and varied life, of which I know only fragments. He was a classic working-class "grammar school boy" and got started in the civil service. However, conscientious objection to the Korean War led to prison, working in forestry and eventually a different career in the Health Service. He was a Labour councillor in Aintree. He was also enormously cultured and well-read - sometimes dauntingly so, for a companion who was just a university lecturer! He was also of enormous service to the club, and to mountaineering. He was National Trip Organiser for Red Rope for several years, and a mainstay of the national committee. He was also booking secretary for the Alex MacIntyre Hut near Glencoe in Scotland, and a member of their committee; so when Red Rope booked the "Alex Mac" he booked it with himself! Like many of us he joined the Mountain Bothies Association - but unlike most of us he went on their bothy repair working parties.

Arthur was a great mountaineer and a great friend. We thought he would go on forever, and it was an immense shock, and loss, when he didn't.

Humphrey Southall

I have many memories of walking with Arthur over past years with Red Rope, especially going back to the time he and Pat lived in Liverpool. He was such good company, wise and full of interesting stories and opinions. Above all he was always was a quiet inspiration on the hills. Especially one Easter staying in Onich, Arthur, Humphrey and myself decided to attempt Ben Nevis by the Carn Mor Dearg ridge. We set out in brilliant sunshine, wearing shorts. Half way up, a sudden snow storm caused us to put on warm clothes and waterproofs. Reaching the summit, the snow was horizontal and we were in a white-out! Arthur calmly reached into his inside pocket for the emergency compass bearings and paces, then proceeded to lead us safely to the return path off the mountain. Relieved, I so much appreciated his skills. His experience, knowledge and love of the mountains will be an enduring legacy for us all.

Anne Maloney

I have a particular memory of Arthur which has a photographic quality. We were on an RR trip to the Don Whillans hut in the Roaches – 'in' being the operative term - part of what is now the kitchen/dining area has been hewn out of the rock, forming an irregular, angular space at the back of the room, at the top of which is an alcove.

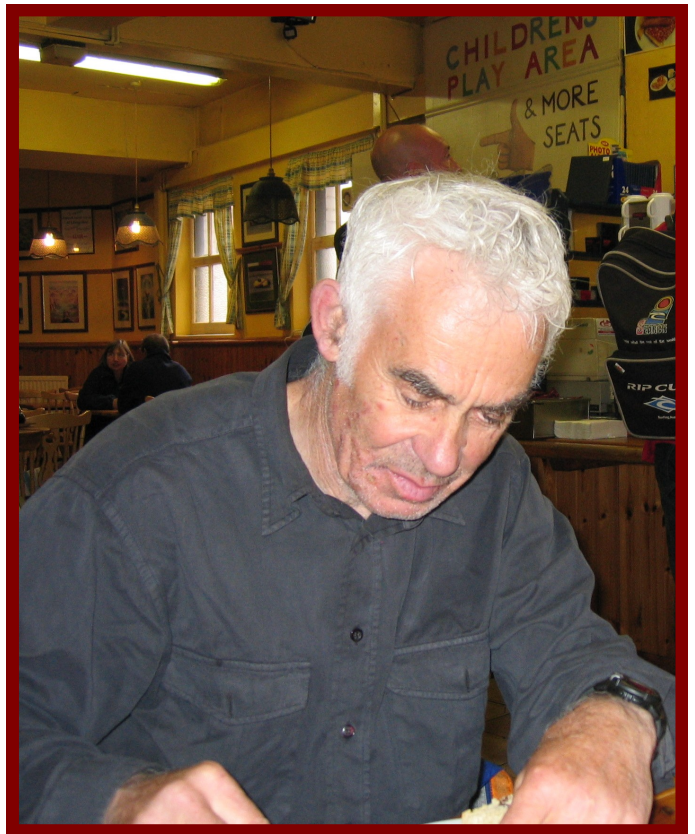
At the end of dinner Arthur quietly shinned up to the alcove and sat there with his legs crossed and a broad grin lighting up his face like a demented gargoyle! He would have been well into his sixties at the time. This seems to sum up a charming sense of mischief and delight which was never far from the surface in someone who was remarkably well-read and knowledgeable – a great combination of attributes.

The world generally seemed a better place when I was with Arthur - I am one of many who will miss him.

David Symonds

I met Arthur in Red Rope so knew him as a very fast, knowledgeable mountain walker, with whom I could never keep up. When he and Pat moved to London a while back, I thought we down here would be able to show him around, take the lead for a change - some hopes! Within weeks he had become a member of the British Museum and was able to take us to exhibitions for free; he was recommending a whole variety of things - plays at the Globe (not Shakespeare as we agreed we weren't too fond of all the royalty in his plays), cheap pensioner afternoons with discussions and free tea and biscuits at the National Film Theatre, and free talks at the Wellcome Foundation. And to listen to him and our esteemed editor walking around any art gallery was a lesson in itself. He joined the Kingston Philosophy Club and walked huge numbers of London walks. An amazing man, who walked fast, talked fast and thought fast.

Pam Case



Arthur was one of the few Red Rope members who shared my interest in anarchist politics, though he was much more knowledgeable and better read than me. It was rare to mention a political movement or theory that he didn't know about, and I will miss our occasional political discussions as well as his company in the hills.

Where conditions and companions allowed he was not averse to applying a libertarian approach to his walking routes, wandering as the mood took him. I remember a particularly great day out when he and I had stayed on in North Wales after a Red Rope weekend and were blessed with a gloriously hot sunny day. We decided to do a walk in the Moelwyns, an area that neither of us had been to for some time. Being less than assiduous with the map, and engrossed in conversation, we found ourselves, towards the end of the day, on the wrong bit of Moelwyn Mawr for our descent to Llyn Stwlan. While I sat, tired, on the edge of the drop, Arthur went off 'exploring' and came back 15 minutes later, having located a crumbly descent, which although not pleasant, was perfectly do-able. We ended the day with a stroll back to the car at sunset, and a meal cobbled together from the trip's leftovers!

Barbara Segal *who also took these photos*

arthur howarth 1936 -2013



Arthur and his wife Pat both sadly died earlier this year. They had two children, Sarah and John, who kindly provided these photos. See preceding pages for members' tributes to a remarkable man.

