

EDITOR'S NOTES : A.C.S. POSTMORTEM

It could be old age, but A.C.S.'s are definitely getting more difficult to follow, this latest being no exception and more lead-brained ideas seemed to be flying around than ever.

There was a fairly innocuous, though rapid start, pity in many ways we slowed down, with everything being passed before we got to it and hopes arising of the first ever one pint A.G.M.. Things settled down however, with the election of the new committee. Barrie Crook was manoeuvred into the Chairman's post in superb mug-of-the-year style and the rest of the committee fell in place behind him without too much hassle. It was the last thing that did. What followed was either a full and frank discussion about the ethos of the club or a load of cobblers, take your pick.

George Parker threw the first hot potato by challenging the one year qualification period for full membership and suggested a simpler system of vetting prospective members on club meets, "don't like the cut of that fellow's jib, eh major?", or at the very least insisting new members attend a given number of meets in the introductory year, which is supposed to happen anyway. This prompted an introductory member to ask how many meets full members attend and suggest this stipulation apply to them. Realisation dawned, that as few members, full or introductory attend that many meets anyway, such a stipulation could rapidly lead to the club's demise and the matter, as they say, was dropped.

It had unfortunately set a few people thinking, not least John Sealey, who suddenly proposed a scheme for kicking all the walkers out of the club and passing them on to Lytham Ramblers. Now you might think some people would take exception to a remark like that. Well, you'd be right - some people did. In fact it brought a fair storm of protest. One or two said it was primarily a walkers' club anyway and therefore the climbers should be kicked out. Others started to define 'mountaineering' and Brian Nelson, admirable as always, told a very salutary tale of a young lad who started climbing in Wales and which I don't think we got to the end of. I must ask him to finish it some time.

Anyway, the matter was finally resolved by a bright spark who said that if all the walkers had to climb a crag, then all the climbers should be able to navigate across the hills with map and compass. Now I don't want to make this meeting sound too much like "Death Wish III" but once again it became pretty obvious that with all the walkers stranded halfway up some crag and the climbers lost without trace the outlook for the F.M.C. was again looking fairly bleak. Fortunately what passes for good sense finally prevailed and it was decided that things should continue as before though with a definite need to encourage and develop new climbers.

Future club policy reflected the felt need for a continued emphasis on successful club activities and with this perhaps a little more club spirit?

Stair hut adaptations were again mentioned and the new hut secretary, Dave Westby, has this in hand.

Club membership and finances remain healthy as ever though sadly this is once again due almost entirely to income derived from other clubs using the huts and our own use of the huts is astonishingly or shamefully in decline.

What more can I say! Best of luck to the new committee and keep sending me the articles.

Eddie Craig.

NEW MEMBERS.

Full: Mr. J.A. Hartley  
Introductory: Richard Horton  
Stephen MacDonald  
Alan Sharpe  
Nicholas Harms

THE ADVERTS.

For sale: 1 pair Scarpa Fitzroy Boots, Size 41. Price £35.  
Almost new (price new new £79)

Contact: Brian Nelson  
57 Princess Way,  
Fleetwood 4117.

HUT AVAILABILITY.

April	1-2-3	Langdale
	8-9	Stair
	15-16	Langdale
	22-23	Stair
	29-30-1	Langdale
	29-30-1	Stair families
May	6-7	Stair
	13-14	Nant Peris (Vags)
	20-21	Stair
	27-29	Stair.
June	3-4	Langdale
	10-11	Both hut-to-hut
	17-18	Langdale
	24-25	Stair
July	1-2	Langdale families
	1-2	Stair
	8-9	Langdale
	15-16	Stair
	22-23	Langdale
	29-30	Stair.

FUTURE MEETS.

Easter	April 1-4th	Rock climbing Cornwall	
	1-4th	Muir of Inverey hut	D.Earle, Poulton 890283
	17th	Coach Meet	D.Laycock, Clev.869950
	23-24th	Wales Corris hut	J.Wiseman, Clev.826594.

SOCIALS. The Buccamoor, 8.30 pm

April 13th 1983 - Dave Earle's Audio Visual Extravaganza.

May 11th 1983 - Another Brick in the Wall - Audio Visual Presentation on Hadrian's Wall by G. Schofield.  
(Please note 8.15 pm start.)

May 17th 1983 - Trip to Thwaites Brewery, Blackburn - contact Don Nichol on Blackpool 869950 (20 places only)

DUNNERDALE IN DANGER.

Concern is expressed that the Forestry Commission have plans for further mass afforestation in the Duddon Valley, particularly on the open fellside above Grassguards. The Friends of the Lake District and other concerned bodies are strongly opposed to this and request anyone sharing their views to protest, either by writing to their M.P. or direct to the Forestry Commission, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 7AT.

B.M.C. NEWS.

The B.M.C.'s annual Dinner and A.G.M. will be held at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis on Saturday, 23rd April. A.G.M. 4.30pm Dinner 7.30 pm for 8 pm. Tickets £6.50 from B.M.C. Office, Crawford House, Precinct Centre, Booth Street East, Manchester M13 9R2, Phone 061-273-5835.

Hotel rates £5.75 bed and breakfast, Phone 0286-870253, asking for special function rate.

Cheap Travel from London to Grenoble, Chamonix, Geneva, Verdon, Courmayeur (Aosta) Turin, Milan (Dolomites).  
From £50. return - Contact B.M.C. at Crawford House.

Training Courses:

Peak District May 14/15th.

Guidance in helping Novices.

A course for those involved in instructing novice climbers.  
Cost £18.

SUPERMAN OF THE SLOPES or A PILLOCK ON THE PISTE.

It was early morning in La Plagne and the summit snows of the Dôme De Bellecôte shone in the first rays of a sun slowly burning its way upwards in a cloudless sky.

Meanwhile two thousand metres below in the apartments of ski resort Plagne Bellecôte, primitive life was already astir. Tom Carroll, stomach and bladder pressing, blundered inelegantly from room to room, whilst the bog playfully eluded him. Other occupants of room 326 lay transfixed in horror, contemplating the possible consequences of this particular high stakes game of hide and seek and willed the aforementioned Mr. Carroll on to success. All that is except the editor who as is his wont at this time of day lay peacefully asleep in his pit blissfully unaware of the drama being enacted close by.

Sadly, wherever you are in the world morning always starts about the same time and anyway ski-ing lessons booked for 9 am. had

been paid for in advance and even French Franks should not be wasted. The editor made it, washed, breakfasted and suitably attired he assembled with others of his ilk, that is the non-skiers of the party on the nursery slopes and waited to be told how to do it. What a happy band we were. Derek, the solicitor, Alan the drinking man's socialist, Tom Knowles who would have liked to and Jackie who wouldn't, not forgetting Terry our enthusiastic instructor.

That first morning went well. He did simple little exercises like lifting the front end of our ski and then lifting the back, we slid short distances, had to bend down and touch our toes then our knees then our chest then our heads. We bent our knees and stood up again. I also did a lot of falling over and skiing into snowdrifts, but then I did that all week.

Terry, our instructor, seemed suitably impressed and soon had us higher up the slopes on a more demanding little practice area.

It was about this stage where I began to realise something was wrong. Clearly I had had the misfortune to hire a faulty pair of skis. Could there be any other explanation for the fact I was patently unable to turn in the direction I wished, or indeed any direction; for the fact that I was unable to stop by any other means than by running into something and was still falling over?

For some obscure reason Terry still remained ridiculously enthusiastic and for the next three days dragged us all over the resort whilst my skis continued to let me down badly and I still kept falling over.

In the evenings we sampled the delights of this purpose-built resort, which included beer at £1.80. a pint! Suitably imbibed on this stuff our self-styled guru, Tom Carroll, lectured us nightly on the benefits of Thatcherism, Roman Catholicism, procreation, the evils of mental infidelity and why we should all buy sheep in the Falklands. I think I preferred falling over!

Also fondly remembered is a talk he gave on pig farming in Denmark though on that occasion someone else got the bacon.

Round about Thursday, however, things were beginning to change. I had been thinking thoughts like upper torso to the fall line; hips to the slope; bend the knees; stick the pole in and turn as you come up - always remembering to counter-rotate. On the easy bits I was even managing to remain upright. So off I went on my own, determined to get it together. At the top of my chosen run I watched a group of froggie brats, eldest about 5, receiving instruction. There must have been about twenty of the little beggars all skiing faultlessly in a crocodile formation. I set off, things were going O.k., style rubbish, but I was getting down. Then I came to the mogul field. Moguls for the uninitiated are snowhumps formed by the turning of skiers on steep slopes. They can cause problems. But not this time, I unweighted, I might even have counter-rotated; anyway, I turned and turned again; I had control, master of my own destiny and my skis. Then it happened ..... I crossed my tips..., crossing your tips is a bad scene. Once you've crossed your tips that's more or less it - there's really nowhere for you to go, progress stops, suddenly.

I crashed down hard and lay there, decidedly undignified, head down and skis in the air, still crossed! I rolled over slowly. The froggie brats came ski-ing past; still faultless, still in perfect formation. Their spindrift wafted in my face and a tear rolled down my cheek. Hitler was probably right about the French, whatever he said about them, he was probably right.

At moments like that lesser men may well lose heart but not the editor. Though I never did quite get it together, I struggled on for the remainder of the holiday generally suffering further humiliation like falling off Pomalifts in front of large crowds and falling off my skis in front of anyone who happened to be around.

However, all was not in vain and I can say that I was undoubtedly a whole lot better at the end of the week than I was at the beginning. You couldn't say I'm a ski-er, but you couldn't say I'm not. I had a great time and I didn't actually break anything. Some things got twisted and some things got bruised but nothing got broken. The Piste will see me again.

The holiday just referred to was a week in the French Alps, organised by Red Guide Ski Tours, Dickson Road, Blackpool (free plug!) who run coach holidays to various ski resorts throughout the season. About a dozen FFC members went on this particular trip and all enjoyed themselves. Travelling by coach saves a few bob and overall represents extremely good value. Accommodation was excellent as was the weather and snow conditions. The resort offers an amazing number of shops and facilities and even English papers, one day old, were available, all of course at a price. The supermarket sold all sorts of goodies but due to the self-catering nature of the apartments, the editor usually frequented the frozen food compartment. Thank god for frozen pizza.

Eddie Craig.

#### IN SEARCH OF SNOW, Mark 20.

The idea of the "In search of Snow" meet was conceived by Hon. Member Raymond Legge, some time about 1953, so this could be about Mk 30, but as ancient records have long since disappeared, it doesn't matter much and, what is important is that this old establishment has memorable days to its credit and I am happy to have been the leader on so many.

Not always have we found the "white stuff". One year we searched for hours on Red Screes, vainly searching, until, when we found some about the size of a dining-table we jumped up and down on it shouting "We've found it!"

More often, however, we have had snow in plenty and many an epic. This year was well up to standard. The preceding week had brought gales, high winds and snow over most of England. On Saturday the temperature rose and the roads were cleared. On Sunday there was a good covering all over the Lake District, but a solid blanket of cloud prevailed except (surprisingly) on Scafell Pike.

Twentyeight members attended and the route chosen was from Dungeon Ghyll to Seatoller. Various groups chose the route of their choice and the mountains ascended were Scafell Pike, Great Gable, Glaramara, Allen Crags, and Bowfell. Various gullies and ice climbs were completed on Hungry Knotts.

Conditions were very dodgy. A succession of snow-falls in the preceding weeks produced, in many places, soft snow over-laying solid ice. Navigation was very difficult in the thick cloud where paths and cairns were often covered in deep snow. Of course mistakes were made but eventually everyone arrived in good spirits at Seatoller. Anyone concerned about the Club going "soft" should be reassured by the way the members, new and old, tackled this crossing of the highest peaks in the Lake District successfully in such difficult conditions.

It was a great pity that there were some empty seats in the coach and that the Club had to subsidise the cost. So could I appeal to members to help future meet leaders, and the Club, by supporting these coach meets and booking early.

Jack Jowett.

#### LACANGARBH.

##### Saturday - 26th February 1983.

Peter Roscoe, George Parker and myself, left Laggagarbh to attempt Curved Ridge/Easy Gully on the Buchaille. We started with a short ice pitch followed by numerous pitches of interesting scrambling. Although we could have completed the climb with an easy snow slope, Peter Roscoe decided we would do a variation which proved to be desperate and we eventually arrived at the top of the Buchaille (Stob Dearg).

On Saturday night everyone visited the cinghouse for some fizzy Scottish beer. I turned in early at about 1.00am, only to be awakened by one FHC member falling down the hut stairs, followed shortly afterwards by the present chairman falling out of his bunk. (Did he fall or was he pushed??)

##### Sunday, 27th February

Sunday morning was fine. Phil Caley's party said they would attempt the Aonach Eagach ridge. Dave Earle and Tom Carroll set off to go skiing. Peter Roscoe, George Parker, Barrie Crooke, Christine and myself set off to do the Zig Zags on Gleann Aonach. We completed the route and walked along the ridge to Coire nan Lochain, but as the weather was deteriorating we descended to the car. On our return we discovered that Phil Caley's party had left for home and we decided to follow suit and pack up.

Although the weather had been poor, I had at least managed one route on the Buchaille on my first visit to Glencoe.

Bob Killea.

#### LUNDY MEET August Bank Holiday 1983 (Meet Leader Martin Dale)

Prices: The Barn and Return Flight - £50.75.

Camping & Return Flight - £41.50.

Meet fully subscribed, leader requests cash urgently. Possibility of further places due to drop-out - anyone interested, please contact Martin, 29 Manor Road, Blackpool (no phone number)