

FYLDE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWSLETTER

APRIL '89

A.G.M. C.I.C and the M.D.I

Having declared ourselves successful for 1988 Mark Harding started off the 40th A.G.M. in fine style pronouncing words like polarising and club! His teacher training was coming into its own like handlebars on a bike, and after outlining the details of our activities of the past year he told us we were getting old, approaching 30 yrs — from either direction — and we weren't attracting many youngsters. But little did he know that someone who had just joined the FMC is the biggest rising star in the climbing world since Johnny Dawes was three ! and was just waiting to turn on the style. (More of that later). Anyway, we've got tons of money, the huts are lovely and us committee members are wonderful !!

The C.I.C hut meet this year happened on a weekend for the first time and for the second year on the trot we think we probably got the best conditions of the year. No Red Rope Climbing Club there this year, but Jerry and I provided some entertainment on the Sunday. Having done Glovers Chimney the summit was in a white out, we took a bearing, followed it religiously, and after an hour found ourselves back at the fuckin trig point again !! God knows how. Anyway we found the tourist path and completed a 12 hour day. Meanwhile a fork of lightning found Andy D. and Simon F. lifted them off the mountainside and deposited them a few yards away. An interesting day !

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Routes done; Garadh Gully II | Cuurtain V *** |
| Glovers Chimney III/IV | Tower Ridge III *** |
| Comb Gully Butress III/IV | Green Gully IV *** |
| Italian Climb III/IV | Tower Scoop III * |
| Orion Direct V *** | |

In the next newsletter there is a World Exclusive ; The Martin Dale Interview (M.D.I) , what you want to know and what you really rather not know about one of our better known Crag Rats. This extremely in—depth interview will, unearth many of Martin's personal and profesional acheivements and aspirations. Other F.M.C personalities may follow this literary downfall.

On a recent trip to Derbyshire Judith thought she might try her hand at a spot of rock climbing, so like all intro members she was introduced gently on an easy route , Judith didn'teven know she had done a route ! two V.S.'s followed and she just romped up them. So on to the H.V.S.'s and thinking a chalk bag was an extra trouser pocket she did the route

with one hand asking Johnny Hickman at the top what all the fuss was about !! Seriously though, it sounded like a good weekend and all intro members are welcome (especially on Intro meets) and a brilliant time is almost guarenteed.

Change of Address Cont

Mick Van Gulik
Red Horse Hotel
Keswick
Cumbria LA12 4QA
Tel 07687 72211

Sean Smith

Intro Members

Richard Hone
197 Broadway
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Gian Cario Incerpi
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Full Members

Avril Whittaker
15 Broadwood way
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Brita Margaret Warhurst
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Change of Address

John Cushnie
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FY5 1BB

Mark and Viv Broughton
25 Elms Drive
Bare
Morcambe
La4 6DG

Socials

3rd May Club Slide Competition.
Wed 24th May Boozy Bike Ride.
" 21st June " " "
" 5th July " " "
" 26th July " " "

All Boozy Bike Rides start at 6-30 pm at Breck Rd. Any queries ring Louise Fortune.

Hut Availability

| | | | |
|-----------|------------------|----------|--|
| April 1/2 | Lang | May 5/6 | Stair |
| 7/8 | Stair | 12/13 | Lang (Working Wknd) |
| 14/15 | Lang | 19/20 | Stair |
| 21/22 | Stair | 26/27/28 | Lang. (Mon onwards both huts available) |
| 28/29/30 | Lang | | |
| | Stair (Families) | | |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| June -- Both Huts Available. | July 7/8 | Lang (Fell & Raft Race) | |
| 10/11 | Stair (Intro Meet) | | |
| 17/18 | Hut to Hut Meet | 14/15 | Stair |
| 24/25 | Stair | 21/22 | Chester Hut |
| | Lang (Families) | 28/29/30 | Stair |
| June 30-July 1st | Stair | | |

17 Rosebery Ave
East Brighton
Melbourne
Victoria 3187
14th Feb 1989

Dear Cherry,

Just a quick note to let you know that we are having a good time in Australia.

My climbing stopped due to pregnancy.

Rory Alexander was born on the 12th January 1989. He weighed in at 9lb 6oz. A potential Rock Star. He is very agile and is keeping us fit just carrying him around.

Please let all our friends in the club know. I shall try to write to them.
Tell Andy Dunhill — I finally made it a few years late.

Best Wishes
Wendy Welch

If the Gas Runs Out

The people to ring if the gas bottles run out at the Little Langdale hut are Crofts of Ulverston. The number is 0229 56235. They deliver on Tuesdays and Thursdays but you must ring at least the day before. Once done please tell Don or any committee member.

New Chester Hut Booking Sec

The new booking Secretary for the Chester Club Hut is:

Miss Denise Robinson
10 Churton St
Broughton
Chester CH3 5ED
Tel Chester 49984

For sale

Walking Boots SCARPA Size 43 (9)
£30 Mr Dale Tel 33479

The Copland Track

In December '87, I was in Queenstown New Zealand, the Chamonix of the South Island. The sun was blazing and the temperature was in the eighties. "Not bad for Christmas", thought I, as I festered by the shores of Lake Wakatipu.

I had just finished a few weeks bush walking from Queenstown via Glenorchy and the Dart Glacier, ending up in Wanaka after crossing the Cascade Saddle and the Motukituki Valley. From there I had hitched to Mt Cook in the hope of doing the Copland Track before finally heading up north for Christmas. But the weather had been useless and after a few days walking up smaller hills and watching avalanches, I decided to return to Queenstown to sort out some gear, check my mail and finally say goodbye to the Naylor family who had put me up in their holiday home overlooking the lake. (We had all been evicted from the Hostel after a fast and furious Thanksgiving Day).

So here I was, nose peeling and feet burning, trying to figure a way of getting my gear from the house. Tim Naylor had failed his exams at Varsity and the whole family had headed for Dunedin to sort the Tutors out. I didn't have a key.

One day and several phone calls later I was told that if I were to lift the patio doors out of their tracks, I could get in the house. The Kiwi's are renown for their trust and hospitality, but this beat the lot!

I packed my gear, replaced the patio doors and headed back up for Mt Cook again. Now I was in a hurry because there were only a few days left to Christmas and I had a lot of ground to cover.

When your in a rush, things go slowly (so sayeth Sod) and it took me all day to hitch and walk to Mt Cook. When I arrived the weather was bad again. Only an hour before and twenty miles away I had been in vest and shorts and de-hydrated, but now I was soaked and freezing.

Once I had checked into the plush Mt Cook—Hilton—Youth—Hostel. I checked the notice boards and found another English person, Patrick Erew, who wanted to team up to do the Copland Pass and so it was decided to get up at dawn the next morning, suss the weather out and go for it (maybe).

Now the Copland Pass isn't an easy walk by anyones standards, requiring ice axe and crampons for the actual crossing and a certain degree of fitness. It was originally used as a way for people to cross from Fox Glacier on the West Coast, via the Copland Valley, over the south Alps and down to the Hermitage at Mt Cook, some 50Kms all told. The local guides made a good living out of it by taking rich Europeans over. They still do, except nowadays they rip the Yanks and Japs off for \$300 a time before throwing them over the other side. Even without a guide it still costs \$20 and you're expected to take 4 days, checking in by radio each evening at the huts. A sensible idea though as many people have died through under-estimating the route.

The following morning we were up at dawn. The sky was perfectly clear and there wasn't a breath of wind, so after a quick breakfast and a brew we set off up the Hooker valley. Up ahead, Mt Cook, 12421 feet high and looking twice the size, reared up, a huge pyramid of snow and ice barring the way. Our path led up to the Terminal Moraine of the Hooker Glacier, before taking a left turn up a steep broken ridge to the Copland Pass. By this time the sun was beating down burning nose, lips and boiling the brain.

Two and a half hours later we arrived at the Hooker Hut, hot and thirsty. After applying lots of zinc to nose and face and having a swig of water, we set off up the ridge. This is quite a steep and broken and has plenty of short scrambling pitches — lay backing with a forty pound sack is interesting to say the least.

After a couple of hours fouguing our way up the ridge, we arrived at the Copland Shelter, a corrugated hut full of bunks and flies. This is an emergency shelter for when the weather turns bad which can be very quickly. Even now the wind had picked up and Mt Cook was starting to don its misty cap, always a bad sign. up ahead a six hundred foot, sixty degree snow slope with the top two feet soft, good for avalanches. These were even a few crevasses to give it that extra edge.

On with thge warm gear, crampons and ice axe with a short rope to tie on to and we ploughed our way up. This didn't take too long and when we reached the top we found three other blokes up there, wandering around trying to decide which way down. On closer inspection I saw that they weren't wearing crampons and they had Safety Boots on too! "Eh up", thought I, "Hard men!". But when I saw the washing line and the ice axes being used upside down, I thought otherwise. They turned out to be Kiwi's, which explained a lot! They were also lost and so after we sussed out the easiest way down we left them to it.

The west side of the divide is steeper and more exposed to the elements, so it was a case of traversing on to rock slabs and then across frozen snow, untill finally we could untie and glissade down to the snow line.

Before us was the Copland Valley, all 30kms of it. It is very steep sided up here and the river seems to wind its way down through dense jungle and deep gorges. This should be fun, I said to myself, looking for any indication as to where the Douglas Rock Hut might lie, our stopover for the night. After a few hours fighting our way through the bush the hut appeared suddenly, perched near a thundering gorge full of blue/grey melt water. It was good to put the feet up and have a brew, contemplating life and knackered body, some nine hours and twenty four kms after starting.

About three hours later, whilst chewing on a piece of Salami and watching one of the native birds demolish my boot, the three Kiwis turned up red eyed and goosed. The night before they had got losed on the walk up from the Hooker Hut and so had spent the night in a tent

burried behind a rock during a bad storm. Everything they had on was wet, so they dumped it all in a pile and crawled into their dank pits to kip.

The next day we were up early again hoping to walk out the 25 km's to the road, to try and get as far up the west coast as possible. The Kiwis were awake too, but they were snowblind and kept falling over each other whilst trying to get sorted out but they stoically refused, so after leaving a months supply of Anadin's with them, off we went.

Almost immediately the fun started, with a wild crossing of a chicken wire and Hawser bridge, rocking wildly above the river — I couldn't help thinking about the poor buggers back in the hut, they weren't going to enjoy this!

Further on the track became harder to follow and more closed in. I remember looking up through the trees at the snow covered tops and hanging glaciers, half expecting to see Teradactyl's wheeling overhead or a Giant Moa striding up the path. This is made even more noticable by the Giant Tree Ferns or PUNGAS which abound in New Zealand, giving it that extra primeival touch.

Welcome Flats appear after a few hours plodding, a very apt name as here the valley widens out briefly into a lush meadow and the river calms down a touch. But relief doesn't last long as the Sand Flats home in to a Welcome Feast of fresh meat. It makes you wonder who named the place — Humans or the blasted Sand Flies!

The valley tightens up again and just as you expect to walk into the gorge itself, an old tired looking bridge appears. Just beyond here is the scene where one of the accomadation huts slid into the river earlier on in the year. The landscape had been flattened and was covered in rubble and mud reminiscent of a building site. Apparently one of the Wardens had a lucky escape when he had to leap out of the window of the mobile hut and jump for the other hut that was being built! The alpine fault runs through here and is clearly visible in the hills on either side of the valley. This is the main source of earthquakes and landslides in New Zealand, so perhaps it isn't a good idea to build along it!

After an hours rest we carried on along the last leg down to the road and the West Coast proper. This section is used a lot by day hikers and so is in a good state of repair but it still takes four to five hours hard walking to reach the end. By this time the valley has broadened out, the river having slowed down and mellowed out too. It seems to fit the mood, as at last this fantastic walk comes to an end. I felt very satisfied but also that I had rushed it — even now all I wanted to do was hitch to Franz Josef and then onto Nelson, where I was to meet friends again for Xmas. I'd like to go back to New Zealand and walk here again, but leaving plenty of time to savour it.

Sean Smith.

HOLIDAY BOYS HIT SANTA PONSA

Manchester, capital of low cloud and drizzle. We wished Kevin a merry Christmas and dashed off to meet Steve in a low dive in Stockport. The plane was late taking off due to the loss of the ignition key (such are the perils of flying Dan Dare!), but we met up with Woodsy in Palma (who paid and got more, such as fed) where he and I took the hire car over to Santa Ponsa. In the Holiday Centre bar we threw beer down our knecks to pass the time while waiting for the others to arrive on the transfer bus. Re-united we swilled more beer then moved on to the Aha bar, the Piano Bar for a good boogie on down, baby, and finally the Rising Sun which shortly after, it did.

The Team, Phil (nearly middle aged) Morris, Dave (afternoon boy), Cundy, Dave (pack-unpack) Woods and Steve (Superstar) Walker struggled over to Valdemossa for the first leg of the toilet relay and afterwoods, a route. Steve launched up a steep crack which even he found strenuous. D.C. was a bit out of his depth and never climbed with him again. Myself and Woodsy wobbled fretfully up a pleasant slabby wall at about H.V.S. We didn't drink much that night.

On Boxing Day we met up with some folks from Manchester and followed them to La Gubia. Woodsy hired another car to chase Blimp and D.C. led a pitch avoiding the obvious rock. He and I both led the much better 2nd pitch and Steve stormed up a much harder line to the right. A bit lower down the gorge, Steve found a desperate little number involving 6a moves to a roof and 6b passing it. No one dared follow. Later we took the beer by the neck and watched a strange comedy film in the Fresh Bar.

Woodsy and Janet disappeared again so the three of us headed for Pollensa to seek out a number of Gogarth's spotted on photo's in a book. Heading for Cabo de Formentor we found them, plus numerous Little Ormes, the odd High Tor, Ravenstor and several Llanymynech's. The car kept stopping for photo calls and utterly gobsmacked at the incredible scenery. We investigated a small slabby crag which turned out to be a bag of shit.

Wonkaitis took over and after a mega lie in the five of us headed for Anraitx (Andrex!). The crag is hugely obvious but it took a good hour to find a track leading to its foot. Steve spotted a line and I ended up leading the first pitch on razor sharp rock with some strange moves. Steve continued but had to retreat on my gear. he traversed into a coner, found a peg and in a cave above, several bolts. Above lay a short pitch then a steep and sustained wall at about 5c. The final 5b slab led to the top and magnificent views. The other three found a rather pleasant slab at about Hard Severe. Much later we found Chaplins Bar which had shows of British comedy films and U2 concerts (one and the same?)

At the mention of Alaroh, D.C. went all moody and wouldn't get up. We went anyway and he sulked admirably until he realised that if he didn't

climb a) he could get pissed and b) we couldn't. Woodsy had "a brilliant ramp line" sorted, so we scrambled up to the start and I led an interesting traverse to the start of "The Line". Even Steve declared it "f___ing impossible", so we abbed and let him lead us up a desperate little 6a wall. Back up the ethnic restaurant we drank and ate. The menu was lamb or nothing but despite 40% of us being veggy it was rather good. The garlic sauce was pure Saturn Five.

That night we rediscovered the law of conservation of angular momentum. This involved spinning on a bar stool and getting thrown out.

Things were getting out of hand. It was Friday already and we had still not sent any post cards. We spent a couple of hours at Porto Pi bouldering about and sunbathing then had a salad in a cafe at the top of a hill overlooking Palma. The views were brilliant and the couple on the table next to us were obviously in love -- They cleaned their plates and each others ears.

That evening we had a good look round Palma, finding the market square (an incredible sight by night) and GEM where the locals hide the topos of the best routes and crags. we also found a wheel clamp on our car which cost us several thousand potatoes to have removed.

On New Years eve we hit the Torrent de Paries after a harrowing drive over icy roads. The gorge is quite impressive but we played on the beach at its lower end. Janet and I found a nice diff slab and Steve took Woodsy up a bolted E1 opposite. While I did that with D.C., Steve and Woodsy climbed a steeper line round the corner. With a bit of verbal I was able to struggle up it too, at about E2 5b. D.C. and I jumped about manically with delight afterwards while the others nosed around farther up the gorge.

Back over the icy roads to a bar in Selva and the two naffest bars in Santa Ponsa, the Wellington and the Kensington Arms, the latter being a visual representation of Aggadú in middle aged spread. Thus we celebrated the death of 88 in the Holiday Centre bar where Steve danced to the delight of some newly arrived wooley woofers. D.C. and I innished the night with gigantic vodka and pineapples which caused D.C. to take the next day off while the rest of us searched out new crags.

On Monday, Janet returned to England and the boys returned to La Gubia. Steve headed for the huge left wall of the gorge and hauled me up a big 5c pitch. Over to the right the Daves were on a nice 5b job, so I led that afterwards. Steve led a 6a slab and I did more haul sack impersonations. Woodsy meanwhile had clipped the final bolt on a 5b/c pitch and retreated, so I led the pitch, pulled on hios gear and got to the top. The superstar was back on the left wall on a sustained E4,6a pitch, which Woodsy declined to follow. That night we had 3 litres of wine with our meal, Oh, by the way, steve doesn't drink.

Next day we went bushwacking on a 3000 footer called Galatzo looking for the Aguilla Forcada (say it quickly). After 3 or 4 hours of

suffering we found it and after another 3 hours I'd circumnavigated it and Steve and Woodsy reached it's summit by the shotest, easiest route.

We ate pizza's and watched Blue lagoon which profoundly affected steve who dropped his orange juice on the floor having missed the table.

D.C. was up before 10 so we headed for Puig Major where it rained! Just a bit miffed we decended to the Torrent de Paries so Steve could do his new route. Woodsy held the ropes while Steve ripped up the side of the wall to set up an abseil. D.C. and I wandered up the gorge which got narrower and more impressive as we progressed. eventually it got 20ft wide and hundreds of feet deep. Both walls were dripping with routes (all unclimbed) and we picked out some wild, wild lines.

An hour and a half later we found Woodsy only halfway up the approach route which turned out to be E3,5a. Steves line remains inviolate.

On the Thursday I became middle aged. Steve and Woodsy mentioned Alaroh which got D.C. into a right mood, so I volunteered a day of sight seeing. The boys were dropped off at the rock (where they didn't do any routes but did a bit of exploring) and we continued to Porto Cristo and the Caves of Drach. This show cave is absolutely stunning being completely stuffed with formations with classical music and light shows. Well worth a visit. Having time to kill we drove round a safari park which is also heaving with wildlife and well worth the £2-50 to get in. The highlights were Ostrich, Gnu, Baboons and Hoopoe while in the baby zoo were more rude, smelly and ugly creatures including a 20ft Pithon.

We ate at Alaroh, drank a bottle of champagne and went out for drinkies in the HC bar. By the way of change I worked my way along the liquers and demolished 8 Mallorcan measures before they closed - D.C. got ill watching my attempt on the second shelf.

At La Gubia again I sat in a quiet world of pink cotton wool while the others climbed or otherwise. Steve led a wall of stunning blankness with some strategically placed cancerous growths at E4,6a. The Daves did a short HVS and Steve took Woodsy up a massive 160ft pitch at the back of the gorge a sustained E3,5c which looked brilliant.

Our last day was spent on this superb crag and the older members both led a fine E1 5a. the Daves both led a good HVS pitch and Steve of course, did another E4, 6a.

The journey to the airport was interesting. We left the crag with the petrol gauge on the red line but determined to give the hire company nothing cruised into the airport with the needle actually off the guage.

Much later (in fact about 2a.m.) I fell asleep while driving along the M55 and nearly hit a car on the hard shoulder. It's owner (who had tried to hitch a ride) was last seen in geostationary orbit.

Phil Morris.

A DIFFERENT SORT OF PARTY

On the 20th April 1969 a quiet young man, Dave Laddiman and a noisy little brat called Phil Morris climbed the Ordinary route on the Great Slab of CwmSilyn, a classic diff. Although they had known each other for some months this was the first route they climbed as a partnership. Never in their wildest nightmares would either have bothered to consider that nearly 20 years later they would still be climbing together and even more improbably, that they would be very good friends.

Dave is now a 45 year old who looks an annoying 30, beyond that he has changed little. He has progressed from being a respected pillar of society to being a bloody fit playboy. Phil has grown a bit but has matured little. Through the years of change he has retained his very own knack of saying the wrong things at exactly the right time.

Their climbing ability has changed dramatically. From the hesitant diff of 1969 they have now reached the heady hieghts of V.Diff and even Severe. On particularly good days, both of them have been known to lead E2.

However, and this is where you come in, on Saturday 22nd April 1989, our valiant duo will repeat that route of 20 years ago and anyone who knows them, thinks they know them, thinks they know them or won't admit to knowing them is welcome to join in the celebrations. All that is asked of you is that you climb the route, if possible, and bring a glass and a bottle of Champagne. The climbing will probably bebgin around noon.

A splendid time is guaranteed for all.

For further details ring either :-

Phil on 05874 371 or

Dave on 06943 439

Two F.M.C. Old Timers Visit Expatriate Members Who Emigrated to Canada Many Years Ago. By Ray & Sylvia Legge.

Having recently returned from a memorable two month holiday in Canada we felt sure that the older members and indeed, many of the younger climbers, would be interested to learn of the activities and achievements of past members.

Our first visit was to be a distinguished inaugural member, Eric Lomas and his wife Dorle, at their delightful home in Banff, Alberta, where we received overwhelming kindness and hospitality.

Eric emigrated to Canada in 1955, set up business in the plumbing trade and soon turned his already extensive knowledge and experience in mountaineering to good purpose, very quickly becoming a Certified Ski Instructor with the Canadian Ski Alliance, Certified Mountain Guide and member of the UIAGM (Union International de Guides Montagne) and is believed to be the first Englishman to gain this distinction. In 1965 he worked as a ski instructor at Mount Baker where he gained much valuable knowledge and experience of snow conditions, eventually gaining a Certificate of Avalanche Control for the U.S. Department of Forestry & Agriculture. About this time he met and married Dorle who had emigrated from Germany some years earlier. A dedicated and dynamic mountaineer, she too became a certificated instructor and guide. Together they moved to Vancouver district where Eric became manager of the Mount Whistler ski area. The very popular slopes are prone to snow slide problems where his qualifications proved invaluable.

In 1967 Eric was appointed Avalanche Control Officer to a large mining corporation near Stuart, a remote area of British Columbia where there had been a heavy loss of life in keeping roads open. Here he developed the technique of helicopter bombing and the use of artillery to bring down dangerous cornices. He was also responsible for the safety and survival training of visiting Glaciologists. There were no further avalanche casualties during his term of office.

The problems of bringing up a family in a remote area finally brought about the decision to move south again so Eric and Dorle bought and developed a lakeside log cabin holiday resort in the Okanagan, a lush fruit growing area midway between the Rockies and the Pacific. This, after some years of very hard work, prospered but although in the heart of excellent ski terrain, they missed the unrivalled Rockies. They sold this thriving concern and moved back to Banff where they again set up business in plumbing, general construction work and property development with their customary drive and initiative.

Eric became Secretary of the Association of Mountain Guides and Chairman of the Banff National Park area of the Canadian Alpine Club. He has now been succeeded by Dorle who, in the past has held several offices on the committee of this prestigious body. Dorle works in the accounts and finance department of "Heliski" an internationally renowned organisation which enables wealthy skiers to be deposited by helicopter high up on the virgin snows of the Rockies to ski down to their luxurious five star type lodges. — It is hardly surprising that their three children Andre, Christopher and Kimberly are all keen and experienced mountaineers.

When they learned of our intended visit our hosts planned innumerable expeditions into the magnificent mountains, lakes and river valleys of the Banff National Park, generously a great deal of their time to our well being and enjoyment. Unfortunately a vascular disorder which I had developed while climbing in the French Alps the previous year has

considerably reduced my stamina and endurance. I had been warned that exertion at high altitude could have dangerous effects, so they made up for this by arranging for to fly extensively over and around the peaks and glaciers of the Rockies. The plane, a tiny Chesna, was owned by a colleague of Eric's with whom he was currently engaged in the prefabrication of mountain refuge huts, most of the work being carried out by Eric's workshops. They are hoisted by helicopter to the required site where they are assembled and erected by volunteers from the Alpine Club members. Having flown round several of these sites in dizzy and sometimes bumpy circles we were much more content to confine our foot slogging to the lower levels.

It was with some regret, but not wishing to outstay our welcome, that after ten days in Banff we moved on in search of further mild adventures. We had set our minds on a coastal sea voyage from Vancouver Island up the 'Inner Passage' between the Islands and fiords of the British Columbia and Alaska Coast. It had been our intention to travel by train or Greyhound coach to Vancouver but Dorle insisted on driving us to the Okanagan, a mere 300 miles on the way! Here we received another sample of Canadian hospitality, being wined and dined and put up for the night with old climbing friends of the lomases. Continuing the next day by Greyhound to Vancouver Island and the following day up the coastal road to Port Hardy at the northern extremity, we boarded ship for Alaska.

There are a number of luxurious and expensive cruise ships plying this enchantingly beautiful coastal route but there are also comfortable and perfectly adequate ferry ships serving the small ports and fishing villages between Port Albert and Prince Rupert in British Columbia and thence up the Alaska Coast as far as Skagway, the jumping off point for the Klondike gold rush pioneers about the turn of the century. After five days we reached this destination and spent a night in this quaint old border town, so redolent of the Wild West with its boarded sidewalks, saloons, log cabins signboarded as bathhouses or, euphemistically, as houses of "negotiable favours". Our characterful old hotel turned out to have been a notorious bordello in the old days and we half expected it to be haunted by the ghost of Eskimo Nell during the night. The following day we made the long trek up the infamous White Horse Pass which took such a toll of men and horses in the winter months of the mad scramble to reach the goldfields beyond.

Anxious to see more of the great mountain ranges between the Rockies and the Pacific Coast we decided to return to Banff by an alternative route, south by sea only as far as Prince Rupert, then east by rail along the wonderful Skeena river valley to Jasper. It was not until we had boarded the train that we realised that the latter part of the journey would be in the hours of darkness when we would see nothing of the mountains. Knowing the trains only run every other day in these parts we took a chance and got off in what appeared to be the middle of nowhere, made our way to the nearest habitation and put up for the

night in a ramshackled old inn. It proved to be a happy choice for the landlord was both communicative and knowledgeable about the area. It appears we had chosen to leave the train near the old township of Hazelton, the furthest navigable point on the Skeena river for the old paddle steamers of the last century and another kicking off point for the gold rush pioneers. Old Hazelton, some five miles from the new and much larger town, is the heart of an Indian reserve and we were able to visit the Indian village of Ksan, famous for its splendid totem poles.

Continuing the following day, this time by road, we reached the great timber industrial centre of Prince George, found a motel for the night and scanned through the telephone directory for another old friend from the early FMC days. There was only one Wilson, Clive in the directory and we phoned, first thing in the morning. "Have you eaten yet?" was the first question I was asked — "no, well don't: I will be along in a few minutes to pick you up". We were whisked off to breakfast and to meet Clive's wife, Margret, with whom we had established a firm bond of affection many years ago when Clive brought her over from her native Norway shortly before he emigrated to Canada. Ultimately Margrete joined him out there, they married, settled in Prince George and now, just 31 years later, we were greeted as though it had only been the week before that we said farewell to them. They have a charming daughter, Lynn, and the family lavished hospitality on us for several days before announcing that they intended to take a day or two off, drive us to Jasper and spend a little time with us there before we continued our journey back to Banff.

We rented a log cabin together on the outskirts of Jasper and spent three wonderful days exploring the world famous National Park. Clive and Margrete are certificated ski instructors and have spent many holidays in these parts so, being familiar with all the most exciting localities, were able to ensure that we saw so much more than we could have possibly done on our own. We were taken off to the remote and hauntingly beautiful Maligne Lake and the breathtaking, water-sculptured Maligne Gorge, the majestic Mount Robson, highest peak in the Canadian Rockies, driven up to the angel Glacier high up on Mount Edith Cavell which we found so impressive that I forgot the injunction not to exert myself at high altitude and could not resist an explorative ramble and photographic foray.

Clive is due to retire in two years time and we parted with the determination not to leave it another 31 years to all meet again but to share a mobile home vehicle and to tour more of Canada and some of America's national parks in the not too distant future.

We boarded a coach for the long drive through the entire length of the Jasper National Park, past the great Columbia Ice Field, over 120 square miles of permanent snow and ice, the largest ice cap in the Rockies. Known as the "Mother of Three Rivers", the Columbia Ice Field gives birth to the Saskatchewan, the Athabaska and the Mistaya rivers. The road continues south and links the Jasper with the Banff National Park

at its juncture with the Trans-Canada Highway at Lake Louise. We were now back on familiar territory which we had covered with Eric and Dorle. After a day or two more at their home and a little more photography in the area we said farewell to our hosts with the reassuring knowledge that we will be seeing them in the not too distant future since they will be visiting Europe and the UK in 1989, when we hope to reciprocate a small measure of the hospitality they lavished upon us.

Eric has expressed the hope that we will be able to arrange a reunion with as many of his old friends in the club as possible and I certainly intend to keep in touch with the Club Secretary with a view to planning a meet and possibly a dinner as soon as we have a firm date.

We were to fly from Calgary to relatives in Toronto for the final part of our two months holiday and realising that yet another early FMC friend had settled in Calgary some years ago we telephoned Caroline Crowsdale (Ivens) — she of international athletic renown — who married Ken Crowsdale, also of the FMC though they are now divorced. It was our intention to take her out to supper and have a brief chinwag before our departure but Caroline would not hear of it, insisting that we stay a day or two at her home, saying that she had some holidays due and as her two sons were away at university she would like to take a day or two off and show us the sights. Being more interested in the wild and rugged parts of Canada we had not expected to be so impressed with Calgary but this fine city had so much to offer, not the least of which were the river gorges, at their best in a blaze of autumn colours and criss crossed with dams and lodges of the beavers and abounding with deer and other wildlife — all within city limits.

Another extremely interesting expedition involved a long drive from Calgary onto the seemingly endless prairie which would have made us wonder what there could possibly be of interest in the "Badlands" of Alberta had not Caroline assured us that we were bound for the world famous Dinosaur Trail in Drumhella, some 60 miles east of Calgary. A truly remarkable area where a vast number of prehistoric animals once existed. The Red Deer River flowing east from the Rockies has carved a way down through the gnarled sandstone landscape to reveal one of the world's greatest repositories of fossil dinosaurs. An impressive new museum of Paleontology has been built to exhibit an unrivalled collection of fossil skeletons and we were interested to learn that one of the architects involved in the planning and construction of this imposing edifice was the one time FNMC member Tony Hargreaves, now a leading architect for the government of Alberta, a far cry from his early days when he designed the club hut at Stair. Caroline had invited Tony to dinner with us but the death of a relative prevented him from coming down from Edmonton where he now lives.

Before boarding the plane for Toronto we learned that Caroline too will be visiting the UK during 1989 so perhaps we will have the opportunity of returning her kind hospitality also.