
LMC Newsletter May 2008



Editorial

Nothing arrived this quarter except a letter from John Burrows. This asked what Steve Lyons meant by having sexagenarians in his party – he thought this was a new word for paedophiles.

I think Steve meant people over sixty, John.

. Thanks to Cath for her Meet Report , and to Andy .

Jim Cunningham (Editor)

Orienteering Meet, January 27th

Jim Cunningham

About 20 people met at Rivington on a cold, bright morning. As usual, Pete and Jenny had sorted maps and checkpoints, but this time the course was a little different. There were 29 checkpoints which could be visited in any order within two hours. Some were worth more than others, however, which I never twigged due to lack of attention at the briefing.

At an average of 4 minutes between checkpoints I thought it impossible to get all, and so missed outliers, which had, of course, more points. However, after a thoroughly enjoyable walk/ jog I arrived back early with 25 visited and no hope of getting to the others in time! Others however found them all, including Clare and Ian and Dave Toon, who won (I think). Taking part was, of course, more important than winning.

Vicky Harold managed to find most of the checkpoints without a compass! She blamed her mother for not teaching her how to use one.

Drinks and snacks were provided at the end by Pete and Jenny, then most had lunch at Rivington Barn to round off a thoroughly enjoyable morning.

Thanks very much to Pete and Jenny for the considerable amount of work in organising this event

Bike Meet, 16th March

Jim Cunningham

Seven hardy souls met up at Witton Park in Blackburn on a chilly morning. There were three Richards, one Dave, one Julie, one Graham and one Jim. A bit of exertion on the way to Pleasington soon warmed the blood, and before long we were flying down the track into Hoghton Bottoms. There we were confronted by a yawning chasm. - about 10 m of track to a depth of 3m had been swept away into the River Darwen. Undaunted, we shouldered our bikes and descended down and across the pit.

After a visit to the “River Darwen Canyon” under the railway viaduct, we exited the Bottoms and climbed to the Tops. (Note – the River Darwen Canyon is a bit smaller than the Grand Canyon). A wander along the canal brought us to Top Lock and gentle, meandering lanes brought us to the pretty hamlet of White Coppice. After a quick photo more lanes to the excellent bridleway above the south shore of Anglezarke, with the reservoir gleaming in the occasional sun.

Then, with three thorn punctures mended we unfortunately got bogged down in the tea room at Rivington, and base camp lassitude set in. Rivington Pike was to be missed, but Darwen Tower would be conquered! However, while climbing over to Belmont on the road, motor bike lassitude set in, and it was decided that Darwen Tower would be missed, but the bridleway through the plantation would be conquered! However it was a little windy on the road and tired legs lassitude set in – in the end we just rode the nearest way back to the cars.

Never let it be said that the LMC give in!

We did cover about 30 miles over five hours, and most people seemed to enjoy some of it!

Borrowdale Meet March 28th – 30th

Cath Sullivan

The March Borrowdale meet saw a great turn out despite a dreadful forecast. The advanced party kept a spot by the fire for the rest of us, who turned up on Saturday morning. The majority set off on a slippery and very windy adventure up Cam Crag Ridge on Saturday afternoon – with the more sensible members of the meet opting for something slightly less exciting but much warmer. Despite our efforts to become the LMC tumbling down hill display team on the way back down from Bessyboot, we all arrived back safely at the hut.

After a short trip to the pub, we were treated to a fantastic slap-up dinner prepared by Barbara and Steve Lyon and Alistair Jeffcoat. Thanks very much to the chefs and to everyone else who helped with serving, washing up, pouring wine, taking daft photographs etc, etc.

On Sunday the weather couldn't make its mind up whether to be as bad as it was forecast and various small teams set off to destinations including Combe Ghyll, Gable, Dale Head for walking, scrambling and some slippery climbing. The weather on Sunday afternoon actually turned out to be quite sunny and pleasant, so we got our reward for braving the rigours of Saturday afternoon.

Thanks very much to everyone who came along and made my first LMC meet such great fun. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves as much as I did.

A February Day in Scotland

Alex Smith (school friend of Nigel Lyle)

Traveling up to Scotland in February, I nurtured the secret hope of sneaking away to the hills and enjoying authentic Scottish winter conditions. I was out of luck. Mild weather had melted much of the snow on the tops and what was left in the gullies was hopelessly soggy. "If only you'd been up a couple of weeks ago!" I felt like murder. "Never mind. We'll go for a walk", I suggested with exaggerated cheerfulness. Phil and I left Callander early and met Nigel and Roger at Tyndrum about half-

past-eight. The cloud was low with intermittent drizzle. Central gully on Ben Lui, our original objective, was clearly off. Nigel, speaking in his capacity as an "outed" Munroist, came in with a strong pitch for Béinn Achaladair. He pronounced it *Achaladare*, by analogy, presumably, with "Where Eagles Dare". Despite local guru Phil's delicate promptings of *Achàllader*, Nigel persisted unperturbed with his *sassenach* pronunciation. Oh God, the humiliation!

We parked the cars by the wildly romantic ruined tower at Achallader farm, got geared up and set off, following a helpful sign indicating "To the Hill"! Ten yards further on we stopped to get our bearings. There was a map-board which recommended the path by the Water of Tulla, while stating unequivocally that it was forbidden to walk on the railway-line. Phil, familiar as he was with the area, confirmed that the waterside track was a particularly agreeable and pleasant saunter. Nigel would have none of it. The railway was shorter, the railway it had to be. He cut short the last murmurings of debate by accusing me of betraying my anti-authoritarian principles. We caved in, plodded up to the top of the embankment and scrambled down onto the track. Is it deliberate? Perhaps not, but the fact remains that railways sleepers are cunningly placed at a distance from each other such as to make simple walking a near-excruciating experience. It gives some idea of what it must be like to be a Chinese woman with bound feet. Walking on the ballast was equally uneven and laborious. At times it was possible to follow a slight path alongside the track, but this required awkward lurches up mini-embankments, upsetting both to equilibrium and equanimity. Still, at least it had stopped raining. We blundered on towards the constantly receding vanishing point until we met with the path crossing over the track and leading up into Crannach wood. The path wound its way in and out of heather hillocks and scots pines, largely following the railway track, but infinitely more pleasant. There is something very special about these remnants of the Caledonian forest which, it is claimed, once covered the whole of the Scottish Highlands. There are those that argue that it should be encouraged to grow back. Phil disagreed. "It would take away their uniqueness". Possibly, but there's still an awful lot of Scotland which is just bare hills!

Reaching the end of the wood, we headed south-east and started up the long steady pull to the top of the first summit of Beinn a Chreathan. There was just sufficient hint of sunshine above the cloud-cover to give some limited grounds for optimism, but, for the time being at least, we pushed unrelentingly up the slope through enveloping mist. Phil and I somehow got separated from Nigel and Roger, but there was little real cause for

concern and, sure enough, we bumped into them again as we converged on the gradually narrowing ridge. More unimaginative plodding finally brought us to the first top at 894 meters. Still in the mist, we sat down and got out our sandwiches. Having each prepared our own, they revealed themselves to be a motley collection. This generated an ill-informed, but nevertheless wide-ranging discussion of the relative merits of various food groups. Roger seemed somehow to have acquired an encyclopedic knowledge of the subject. The near boundless, yet hopelessly cryptic information on the packaging of my own "Freerange Egg and Cress", looted from the previous day's train hamper, provided a surprisingly rich point of departure. Having first exhausted the much-vexed question as to whether the "freerange" qualified the "cress" as well as the "egg", we then drifted onto the subject of quick as against slow release sugars. Roger trumped my sandwich with his very own oatmeal and honey elaboration which, he claimed with un rebuttable confidence, matched all relevant release criteria. Routed, I suggested we press on quickly before my blood-glucose was exhausted. We headed south towards top 961 and then, in a more south-westerly direction, towards the highest top at 1081. The last part leading up to the summit narrowed to quite an impressive snow ridge. With a sugar issue to prove, I found myself in the lead, and without an ice-axe or even a Leki stick to steady me, I suddenly became very conscious of the mountain falling away steeply to both right and left. It would have taken quite some falling off, but I have never been indifferent to exposure. We did not linger long on the top but continued on round in the direction of Beinn Achaladair proper. We were very pleased with ourselves when our mist-navigation brought us out exactly onto the intermediate Meall Buidhe at 978. We carried on easily to point 813. Our progress was slowed by the steeper climb to the mountain's first top at 1036, but after a short rest, we followed the ridge to the slightly higher summit proper and swept on from there. We had been in mist throughout but had enjoyed our own freedom of movement and that intimate feeling for the mountain which mist-walking evokes.

It was Nigel who spotted it first. As we arrived at the third, southernmost top, there was a sudden beam of sunshine coming out of the west. "Look, Glories!" he called out. And turning, we saw our shadows projected onto the mist, with each of us seeing the head of his own shadow, and his own shadow alone, framed by a halo of refracted light. It was an amazing, if unrealistically flattering sight. A portent of some immanent Pentecostal gift perhaps? But we were not worthy and the effect passed. Still, a full Brocken Spectre with Glory, was a miraculous though unsought reward for a day spent prosaically ploughing through cloud. As the visibility

improved, we hurried down the mountain in order to be able to return to the car before nightfall. Down Coire Daingean and then on down Coire Achaladair, from where, looking back, we could see up into the impressive northern corrie of Beinn an Dothaidh and its enticing snow gullies. Some other time, perhaps. In fact, returning the following weekend in better conditions, Phil was able to climb the West Gully with his fiancée, our daughter, Victoria.

Roger had to leave us that evening to drive back to Lancashire. Phil had some work of his own to do, so Nigel and I would be left to our own devices for the following day.

Canada 2008 – LMC WI Trip

Richard Toon

Beauty Creek!! Summarises everything – not the Women's Institute annual pilgrimage to the cakes and jams in Montreal – the LMC trip to the Water Ice specials of Canada's Rocky mountains.

Beauty Creek, the unmanned Youth Hostel, about an hour south of Jasper along the famous Icefields Parkway, was our base for the last few days of the trip. The four-hour drive back to Calgary airport was memorable and exciting in itself, the 4-wheel-drive motors biting into fresh new snow which had accumulated overnight and drifted in parts.

There were eight of us at the start, including our icy American cousins, Nancy and John. They continue to have the advantage over us of cold winters and lots of ice. The trips out were not without event: we sat on the runway at Manchester for three hours while they tried to tow off an emergency-landed plane and Nancy spent the first of a couple of nights sleeping in some distant airport transit lounge en-route.

The Alpine Club of Canada's hut in Canmore is absolutely superb, with good dorms, and a huge drying-cum-gear-sorting room with a plush but magnificent lounge with its panoramic view. This is only, just, bettered by the local café with its \$4.99 full breakfast, or, for the really strong, the belly-buster for a few dollars more – double bacon, eggs, hash browns and double the rest. This treat was saved for the last day – we would not have got off the ground otherwise!!

Day one started as a bit of a jet-lagged boo boo. We flogged up a canyon, towards anticipated ice flows, but

only managed to keep falling through into the stream and getting drenched boots. After stupid persistence, we got the message and retreated, me for a clean pair of dry Smart Wools. Plan B in the afternoon actually worked out well, a trip to the Junkyard!!! No, not the last resting place of Cadillacs and Jeeps, but a stretch of good ice, flowing down in the forest a couple of miles out of town, with a good range of mid-grade routes. We all did a couple, getting used again to the Quarks, the ice screws and remembering not to look up at the shout of "Ice!! Ice!!". We weren't quite eight that day, as some of the party was still en-route from alpine skiing or the delights of the Chicago transit lounge.

That evening, most couldn't resist the local burger joint, but conversation was limited by the muzac and loud locals!

Day two was actually planned and performed to perfection. Now eight at last, we headed for Banff and the rather tedious plod to "Professor Falls", a magnificent flow giving pitch after pitch of steep stuff and good belays. We roped as two twos and a three, Gareth deciding to plod around the woods looking for bears or other wildlife. It was steep but non-serious and the screws went in as deep as you needed. The plod out was no less tedious, except for those lucky so-and-sos who cadged a lift in the back of a pick-up for the last couple of miles (but you still didn't beat me back to the cars, boys!!).

The next day, for me, was perhaps the most memorable. I had spotted "The Ghost" area on the excellent maps on "Eric and Lucie's Bus Trip" website which surely ranks as one of the finest web diaries for a climbing trip that there is. It's a day-by-day full record, with photos and maps, of a superb climbing trip up the west coast of the USA and into Canada. Find it!!

The Ghost is very remote. Me, Martin and David were up well before the dawn and off into the darkness. We took the odd wrong turn and it was a long time before we pulled off the main road. We had skirted southwards around a large mountain block and headed into gentle landscape before turning again towards the north. Navigation was best by mileometer! We pulled off onto the tracking road, the preserve of the loggers and met one huge juggernaut, fortunately with us on the inside of road, with him having to contemplate the drop into the gorge. The dirt road winds on and the mountains get nearer. We get to the top of the notorious Big Hill, a drop down a stony, rough gully onto the bed of the river. We make it. The river bed is wide, with stone and boulders and coverings of snow. There are lines made by previous 4-wheelers but some invention is needed. Its

fun. And the surroundings are truly magnificent yet remote.

We run on until a twist in the river indicates the end of driving and head off on foot over a narrowing of the river and a well-fallen tree. Up the hill, in open forests with a backdrop of massive rocky walls, we plod on, over frozen lakes and follow erratic tracks in the snow. After a couple of hours, we must be there? But it's not obvious. More floundering and without the benefit of any good navigation fix, we reckon we have gone too far. So backtracking, we finally locate not the best ice smear in the district, but no smear at all! "The Sorcerer" is not to be. It hasn't even formed this year!! Ah well, you win some, you lose some. But the situation more than made up for it – one of the most idyllic, remote yet magnificent mountain locations I've visited.

Back to the car, and the final log bridge is slippery with the ice sheet less frozen and weak. I do a less than perfect balancing act and break through, much to the mirth of the other two, who captured it on video for posterity.

Around the corner from the car, we find "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly", a superb ice formation falling into the river. Too late for us to attempt, so we watch a few others performing for the large film camera set up. The drive back is more 4-wheel fun.

Time to leave the delights of Canmore and head north up the famous Parkway drive towards Jasper. After Banff, the road climbs and the traffic is no more. The Rockies are all around us – a lifetime of climbing, as if Glencoe stretched from Wigan to Tyndrum.

We are heading for Beauty Creek, a Youth Hostel by the road, un-wardened in winter. Almost casually and on the way, we stop off for one of the biggest road-side ice crags in the world. Weeping Wall took our breaths away on the photos. In real life, it is awesome, incredible and compelling. It has to be climbed and there is no fight for any route. It is wide enough to swallow lots of teams. Dave and Will opt for the right-hand side and a super wall-cum-groove, leading in three pitches to an overhanging finish. From out "Central Pillar" route, we have a grandstand view. David attacks the central line for us, with me and Martin opting to be belay bunnies. This line also soars upwards, the shocking steepness pressing harder on each pitch. The ice is pretty good and the ice screws bite in. They need to. Just three titanium tubes, in a few inches, are our total belay. Abseiling off depends on the clever Abalokov – the ultimate life hanging on a thread? Hard Grade 5, we reckon. The upper part of Weeping Wall is a full grade harder and left for another day!

Beauty Creek doesn't run to neighbours or local shops. So there are a couple of long trips by volunteers to pick up essentials over the next few days. There are some nice ice falls close by, "Shades of Beauty" and "Meltout", which give us enjoyable and less serious days out. The Hostel gets hot as we employ all the stoves and heaters and we have elegant meals and many brews. "Harder than it Looks" is harder than it looks, a very deceptive, short-looking ice fall of only a couple of short pitches up steeply from the road in the whistling wind. The coldest day by far. It took a lot of finding also, not least because we drove in exactly the wrong direction for most of the morning!! It's my first experience of a big job on ice – an axe suddenly pops out whilst the other is being swung into place. I am seconding so it's interesting, not serious. The plunge accelerates and is long, as the belayer finishes well below the belay tree he was originally stood on top of. Oh heck - I have to do the crux for a second time on ice which is too steep and less than perfect. Half way up, that "climbed out" feeling after an intense week on the ice becomes overwhelming and the final few feet are an uncoordinated gasping struggle.

The drive back to Calgary airport, via a breakfast stop at our favourite café in Canmore, is great. An open road, covered in overnight snow, winding for many miles through rugged mountain terrain. The vehicles are made for this job, and plough through in full command.

We split for the four corners from Calgary. Dave has yet another week of snow fun to come in the champagne powder in Colorado; Nancy has yet another night of luxury on some airport floor to enjoy; we have the circle route over Greenland to contemplate.

Canada is a winter playground. Go there – enjoy!

Grisedale Bike Extravaganza 20th April

Jim Cunningham

Another masterpiece from Ian McClellan this year, after last year's treasure hunt on bikes.

This time we hunted for treasure AND had to take photos of the treasure! How good is that?

We met at the Visitors Centre at Grisedale forest, near Hawkshead. This is undertaking further development and has increased in size massively since I last visited about 10 years ago. Here we purchased a map with about 90

woodland sculptures marked – our task was to find and photograph as many of the sculptures as possible in three hours.

Three teams set out – Dave and Julie, Clare + Clare + another at least, and Jim, Bernard and Josie. Ian circulated. Many sculptures were difficult to find – hidden in the forest. The maps were less than ideal as not all paths were shown and bends on the ground were often straightened on the map. We also did not know what we were looking for – some sculptures are massive, others tiny, many from wood but some stone. Apparently a guide is available which gives photos or descriptions of each sculpture, but we didn't know.

However, in the three hours we found about 25 sculptures – some very impressive. We had lunch in the armchair of one of the sculptures, watching the wooden television. The curtains wouldn't draw, however, and the reading lamp didn't work.



Thanks to Ian for his organization – it was a thoroughly enjoyable day

LMC Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 7 October 2008 – 8.00pm

Venue The Black Dog, Belmont, near Bolton BL7 8AB

Please note that this is a different venue from that shown on the 2008 Club Card

Call for Motions

Any motions to be put forward to the AGM must be notified to and received by the Secretary in writing, with proposer and seconder (both fully paid up members) not

less than 28 days before the meeting i.e. on or by the 8th September. This includes nominations for officer posts and committee members.

Motions offered at the AGM cannot be taken unless pertaining to the officers' reports, amendments, or formal motions of appreciations, congratulations or condolence.

The Agenda and any motions will be sent out two weeks before the meeting.

The secretary's name and address is

Mark Braithwaite

The Glen, Sandy Lane, Cranage, Cheshire, CW4 5HN or by email – markbraithwaite@hotmail.com

Annual Dinner 2008 Details

Please note this is a different date to that shown on the 2008 Club Card

**Annual Dinner 2008
The Shap Wells Hotel
Shap, Cumbria
5th and 6th December 2008**

Dear Members

Yes, its that time of year again when you look for your cheque books and write the 'LMC' a great big fat cheque so we can entertain your every needs at our fabulous Annual Dinner Extravaganza 2008.

As you can see the venue has changed due to Waterside Hotel having complications with their planning application to extend the hotel. After much seeking around, deliberating and enquiring the venue and dates have been chosen. Please make note that this is not the date advertised on the members card. We have had to change the date. It has not been easy to find a suitable venue; we need a hotel with excess of 60 rooms; a mountain region is one of the considerations and of course cost – value for money. The Shap Wells meets all these needs.

The Shap Wells Hotel (junction 39 M6) was the committees choice for 2008. I have visited the hotel and met with the management and I can assure you that the standards we look for will be met by this hotel. It's a friendly hotel and are use to large group booking like ours. All the finest clubs hang out their – The Alpine Club; The Fell and Rock; The 18-30 Club and now The 6month to 80's Club alias 'The Lancashire Mountaineering Club'!

Michelle Beech one of our climbing members has volunteered to act as "dinner lady" this year, so think on do not give her any grief or you will have to put up with me again next year. Seriously though, I must say a big thank you to Michelle for taking over. Her task will not be an easy one. This year the hotel is asking for a considerable deposit in early June so Michelle needs firm commitments from you in the way of a completed booking form and more importantly a **cheque**, so the club keeps its much needed funds in the bank for as long as possible. It would be much appreciated if you could send a cheque for the full amount, as this will ease the chasing up duties (its not easy asking for cheques and phoning around to make sure the regulars have not forgotten). However, if you are a man of your word and promise to send a deposit first followed by the full amount by 5th November then this will also be acceptable. Prices are on the booking form. Babies under 2 are free, and if there are a few children/young teenagers wishing to come give Michelle a call and she can arrange a price with the hotel. Again this year all bookings come through Michelle for Friday and Saturday nights. Well lets get booking – complete and send back **as soon as possible** the enclosed booking form together with the fees. All for now
Julie (ex dinner lady)

Booking form attached below

L M C Annual Dinner 2008
The Shap Wells Hotel, Shap, Cumbria CA10 3QU
Friday 5th December and Annual Dinner on Saturday 6th December 2008
Booking Form

Name (s)			
Address			
Telephone number			
		x No. of People	
Friday Night Dinner Bed and Breakfast <i>Discounted</i>	@ £50 per person		Total £
Saturday Annual Dinner Bed and Breakfast	@ £60 per person		Total £
Child – UPTO AGE 13 (please ring me to confirm cost)			
Under 2 (cots not available)			FREE
		TOTAL PAID	£
Please state requirements below:			
Vegetarian Meal			
Single Room (will be willing to share a twin?)			
Double Room			
Twin Room			
Family Room			
Any other special requirement. Seating arrangements etc.			

Please make cheques payable to 'LMC' and return to **Michelle Beech, 22 Schofield Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancashire, BB4 8SL** as soon as possible. A cheque for the full amount would make life easier for Michelle, cutting down on chasing people up. However, a deposit of £25 per person per night is acceptable with the full amount due 4 weeks before the date. The club is having to place a large cheque for the deposit so early booking is essential – no last minute booking this year, the hotel is a new venue and very strict with bookings. You have been warned!!

Telephone Number Michelle Beech 07920-518582 (mbeech@tesco.net)

Official Use: Full Cheque enclosed £	Date received	
Deposit Cheque enclosed £	Number	

