



York Alpine Club Newsletter

October 2007



Lola makes an honest man of YAC Our-Man-in-Granada Dave Epstein. Congratulations to both. YAC was represented at the wedding in Granada by Tracy, Carmen, Simon C, Peter and Rob.

AGM: Thursday 8th Nov.

This year's AGM will take place on Thursday 8th November in the upstairs function room of the Brigantes Bar, Micklegate at 8pm.

The Agenda for the meeting will be:

- * Minutes of 2006 AGM
- * Secretary's Report
- * Treasurer's Report & Membership Fee - The Treasurer will be on hand to collect your subs for 2008
- * Committee Election.

Vacant Positions: Chair, Social Secretary, Ordinary Member

- * Meets Secretary Report, including:
 - Meets List for 2008 - We will be looking for volunteers as meet coordinators.
 - Suggestions for meets in 2009
 - Report on Sunday Activities

- * AOB

If you would like to add an item to the agenda please let me know by **6th November** and if you like to stand for election to the committee then please let me know or nominations can take place on the night.

Simon Fox
YAC Secretary

Hut Secretary's Report: Meets List for 2008.

Month	dates	Location	Venue	Spaces	Club
Jan	25/26	Lakes	Tranearth, Torver.	32	Lancs Climbing & Caving Club
Feb	14-16	Scotland	Inverardran Cottage	10	Ochils MC
March	21-23 (Easter)	Scotland	Steall Hut	15	JMCS Lochaber
April	18/19	N Wales	Tremadog	15	Bromsgrove & Redditch MC
May BH1	2-4	Lakes	George Starkey Hut	15	ABMSAC
May BH2	23-25	Scotland	Clashgour	12	Glasgow University MC
June	20/21	Forest of Bowland	Camp		
July	18/19	Wye Valley	Camp		
August BH	22-24	Galloway	Camp		
September	19/20	Peak District	Fallcliffe Cottage	10	ULGMC
October	17/18	N Wales	Pen Ceunant Uchaf	18	Chester MC
November	21/22	Lakes	Blea Tarn House	15	Lancs MC
December	26-28 (Fri-Sunday)	Scotland	Not booked yet.		

Trip Report: Clun camp: 4-6th May

Peter, Karen, Annie, Andrew and on Monday- Rob linnie

Saturday 5 May.
Bike ride: Church Stretton-Clun.
Annie, Pete and Andrew.

We struggled up the Carding Mill track dodging the pedestrians. Pete nearly made it onto the plateau without dabbing. From the trig point on Long Myndd, we made our way southwards down the ridge. We were now on the 'Mad' Jack Mytton* Way which is a

long distance mountain bike route that Annie and I had ridden several years previously. We crossed the River Onny at Plowden, climbed Clinton Hill, thrashed through the cycle tracks in Hidden Ditches woods and back to the campsite in Clun.

*Mad Jack would have made a truly great, if short lived, mountain biker:

"The nineteenth century equivalent of a boy racer, **John Mytton's** life has been described as simply 'a series of suicide attempts', such was the reckless disregard he displayed for his own life and well being. Although it is worth remembering that since 'Mad Jack' was in the habit of drinking eight bottles of, initially port, and later brandy, each and every a day, he was most likely in a permanent state of intoxication, which may well have had a bearing on his behaviour. He was fond of riding his horse at the most dangerous obstacle he could find and once galloped full speed over a rabbit warren just to see what would happen. What happened was that his horse fell and threw him to the ground. Both horse and rider survived the experience but it illustrated John's attitude towards danger, as it was said of him that "*not only did he not mind accidents, he positively liked them*". Indeed, nothing delighted him more than to race around the country lanes of Shropshire in his four horsed gig at break neck speed, tearing across crossroads or around corners without regard to anyone's safety, most particularly his own. He once tried to jump a tollbooth in such a gig, thus establishing to his satisfaction that whilst the horses could reach the other side, the carriage was inevitably left stranded where on the side where he had begun. The most famous anecdote regarding the squire's driving habits was the incident when he was driving with a companion and asked him if he'd ever been badly hurt after being upset in a gig. "*No thank God, for I was never upset in one*", was his passenger's response. This apparently shocked Mytton to the core; "*What, never upset in a gig? What a damned slow fellow you must have been all your life!*" and promptly crashed the gig thus rectifying the omission in his acquaintance's experience. Fortunately neither Mytton nor his passenger were seriously hurt but doubtless the latter decided to walk in future.

A keen huntsman who had kept his own pack of hounds since the age of ten, Mytton was clearly fond of animals as he kept sixty cats and two thousand dogs at Halston Hall together with a stable of horses. His favourite horse was probably 'Baronet', who was allowed to join him indoors at Halston Hall where they would lounge in front of the fire together. Unfortunately the squire's tendency to treat horses as his boon companions ended in tragedy when one named 'Sportsman' died after being fed a bowl of mulled port. He also kept a large brown bear named 'Nell', which on occasion he would ride for the entertainment and edification of his guests. To the credit of 'Mad Jack' when the bear took exception to this treatment and bit him on the calf, he took it all in his stride and refused to blame the bear whom, he argued, was simply acting in accordance with it's natural instincts.

Unfortunately not only did John Mytton suffer from a complete disregard his own safety but he also had an equal disregard for money. His acquaintances were later to recount how they would come across handfuls of bank notes scattered across his estates where they had fallen from the pockets of the distracted squire during his travels. There was also the notable occasion when he was returning from Doncaster Races and fell

asleep in his carriage; several thousand pounds (which he had been in the process of counting) was blown out by the wind and scattered across the country. Such losses did not appear to unduly discomfort the squire who continued to spend freely on the upkeep of his foxhounds and horses, on keeping his cellars well stocked, entertaining his friends and generally enjoying himself. Unfortunately in the seventeen years following his coming of age he spent something in the order of £500,000, thereby dissipating his inheritance and incurring debts far beyond his capacity to ever pay" (*From Everything2.com*)

Saturday: Clun Green Man Festival

To save valuable drinking time, we all brought bikes to cycle into Clun from our campsite. We went to Clun Memorial Hall to see Wilko Johnson with support from Blues State UK. (You, dear reader, don't need to be reminded who Wilko Johnson is, do you?) . We preferred the support band. Annie and Pete got in front of the stage and gave the rest of the audience a magnificent lesson in pogoing. Perhaps they could teach the rest of YAC at a social meet?

Not to be outdone, Karen gave us a demonstration of how to cycle home drunk on a bike in the dark nearly-but not quite- falling off. Luckily for her we didn't encounter any traffic coming in the opposite direction; if we had, drivers would have been seen spectral lights oscillating from one side of the road to the other as Karen ricocheted from one kerb to the other. How she managed the cattle grid and the bridge with the low parapet we will never know.

Sunday: Clun Green Man Festival

We spent a lazy Sunday wondering around the stalls in Clun's main street and watching the members of the Plantagenet Medieval Society knocking five bells out of each other with swords, maces and axes.



Half time score: England 2, Wales 0.

Monday: Walking on Shropshire's Volcanos.

We walked up the steep slope of Caer Caradoc, near Church Stretton, in a stiff breeze, and admired the ancient earthworks whilst waiting for the unfit Rob to catch us up.

Raeburn Hut, Laggan. 25-27 May

Debra, Simon F, Carmen, Simon C, Nigel, Peter, Annie and Andrew.

Geal-Charn and Aonach Beag

Peter, Annie and Andrew.

We cycled in from Dalwhinnie along the private road alongside Loch Ericht, past the Culra bothy and left the bikes beside the track leading to Bealach Dubh. From here we scrambled up the Lancet Edge to gain the plateau leading to Geal Charn's summit. We got better views across the great wildernesses looking towards Rannoch Moor from the top of Aonach Beag. We dropped down to the Bealach Dubh separating our Geal Charn from the Ben Alder massif and followed the track back to our bikes. Andrew and Peter raced ahead of Annie down the track leaping their bikes over the drainage channels. It was whilst we were trying to sort the inevitable pinch puncture in Andrew's rear tyre that a grand day out started to look like a possible epic. Firstly the spare inner tube wouldn't fit the wheel rim, then we discovered the tube patch glue had dried up. We were an awful long way from the nearest road, it was beginning to rain and night wasn't that far off. Then Pete's bike had an Immaculate Puncture. Yup, the tyre just went down before our very eyes and no-one had been near the bike. We began to think that Someone-Up-There had got in for us. But the Archangel Annie discovered that she had some pre-glued patches so we were saved from a very cold wet and dark walk to the Popemobile. We got back to the hut very late to find the others gnawing their place mats with hunger.

Mountain bike trip: Raeburn hut- Roybridge.

Annie, Peter and Andrew.

Within two hundred yards from our start at the hut, we were sheltering from a very cold downpour and wondering if the trip would be worth the effort. However the skies cleared and we cycled on a tarmaced road through Laggan to Glensherra Lodge. We joined a good grade Landrover track, past Garve Bridge to Melgarve at the foot of the Corrieyairack Pass. Here we turned westwards and followed a track alongside the infant River Spey to the house at Shesgnan. The map showed a track that followed the river valley, but I don't think the surveyors had been this way since General Wade built the track over the pass. We pushed our bikes through the boggy river valley and ranged over the slopes of Meall Clach a' Cheannaiche above Loch Spey hoping to find any old track going our way. It was only when we glimpsed the bothy of Luig-channal in the distance that we bumped into a lovely rideable track. We forded the Alt Channel and dried off in comfy faux leather arm chairs in the bothy. (we know how to live!) We were now following the River Roy on a Landrover track and entered the land of the 'Parallel Roads' according to our map. We could see these straight marks marching across the hillside far above us and pondered as to what they were. As the map marked them with two parallel dotted lines and labelled them as 'Roads' we presumed that good ole' General Wade had made them as exercises in straight road making. They are, of course, ancient shore lines! The track swooped up and eventually down past the Falls

of Roy to Brae Roy Lodge and a lovely green valley with very tame red deer wandering all over the road. We joined a tarmaced road that led straight to the pub at Roy Bridge. We got back to the hut late again!

Woftrax, Laggan:

Peter, Annie and Andrew.

This is one of Forest Enterprises latest man-made mountain bike tracks, and follows the usual formula of a climb up access tracks then dropping down singletracks with a variety of "challenges" along the way. We think the track designer might have sported a turban because each "challenge" included a heavy penalty for getting it all wrong. The designer put large rocks or sheer drop offs-or both- just where you should have an escape route if you mess up. We found this rather intimidating and more Tigger's cup of tea than ours. *Andrew*

Llechrwd Farm camp, Maentwrog, N. Wales: August 24-27

Gordon P, Margaret, Peter, Debra, Annie, Karen, Andrew

Saturday August 25th Cnicht & the Moelwyns Act I

Karen and Andrew.

The BBC weatherman promised a clear sunny day, but the mountain weather forecast suggested it might be a bit murky above 1000 feet. We packed a compass and Karen put new batteries in her head torch.

We rapidly climbed the ridge and passed a large group of people in the thickening mist, traversed what I presumed was a sort of gendarme and came to the hole in the wall that is the key feature to get on the track for the other peaks. But where had Cnicht and Cnicht North Top gone to? The leader of a group travelling in the reverse direction warned us that the track we were following led to the 'wrong' tarn according to his map and guide book. We plodded on through the ever thickening fog, keeping a lookout for any tracks that would lead leftwards and upwards. Predictably we too ended up at a little tarn with the track following the 'wrong' bank. Was it the track or the tarn in the wrong place? The same thought had occurred to a couple of other groups of lost souls. My suggestion that we were at the northern Llynnau Diffwys was, at first, dismissed because the tarn on our maps didn't include an island. I suggested that the water level had risen and turned the little peninsular marked on the map into an island...and so it was. It's nice being right occasionally, isn't it? So now we knew we were on a track absent from our maps. From there, we located another tarn by walking across country on a compass bearing, then ended up at the old slate workings just as the fog lifted a foot or two. In that brief moment of clarity we spotted a track and decided to follow it rather than attempt the other summits. The waymarks leading us through the old quarry workings ran out leaving us on a featureless hillside with the fog rolling back in. We gained the rim of the Craigysgafn cwm just in time for the fog to lift and reveal the sheerness of the hillside below us and the roofs of Tanygrisiau far below. I told Karen that the village was miles from our starting point, following the cwm rim in the opposite direction led to wicked cliffs, and that our track home was in the forbidding gloom below us. By now she was at Red Alert and checked that her new

batteries were working. Eventually we worked our way down the cwm, found the old miners' track that joined up with what I can only presume was an old tramway incline leading to the road. Once again there were no waymarks and we could hear other walkers wondering around on the boggy hillside. I wonder if they all made it home? We had been out seven hours and not gained a single peak. *Andrew*

Sunday 26th August Cnicht and the Moelwyns Act II

Karen, Debra, Annie, Peter

The weatherman got it right today, beautiful sunshine. As we parked the cars we noticed a large group of people waiting to run up Cnicht. Our pace was quite good we thought until, rather less than half way up, we met the lead runner on his way down.

The walk was worth the effort of a repeat for me so that I could see what I had missed. Yesterday's "crowd of people" were, in fact, standing on Cnicht summit, and the gendarme I had bypassed yesterday turned out to be Cnicht North Top. Today we found the correct tarn but even in the sunshine the track was not the easiest to find. We took our first stop at the old slate workings which were extensive. Annie appeared to be particularly energetic as we walked up Moel-y-hydd and Moelwyn Mawr until Debra informed her that we still had two peaks to do. She had thought we were out for an easy stroll! *Karen*



Annie on Cnicht