

# THE YORKSHIRE MOUNTAINEER

Issue: 382

Autumn 2020



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Arthur Dolphin

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A Gambol in the Gorge

The Yorkshire Mountaineering Club - Founded 1941



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## Cover photos:

Front: The hills of Assynt from Storr

Rear: Suilven sunset

Both from my collection



## From the Editor.

A few people have been kind enough to say they liked the last Newsletter, so thanks for that, although most of the credit must go to John Beacroft-Mitchell and Phillippa Child, who developed the template which gives TYM a professional look.

Once again for obvious reasons, content is somewhat limited but thanks to Caroline and Ken for their input which is much appreciated and means TYM 382 is not entirely devoid of current / recent activities.

I've included another report from the Archives, I enjoyed reading this the first time around and hope that those reading it for the first time also enjoy it. Older Members will perhaps remember it and hopefully enjoy it again.

Here's a reminder of anticipated publication dates for 2021, if they change for any reason I'll try to let you all know in advance.

Issue	Title	Publication date	Deadline for copy
383	Winter 2021	End March 2021	14 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
384	Spring 2021	End June 2021	14 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
385	Summer 2021	End September 2021	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
386	Autumn 2021	End December 2021	14 <sup>th</sup> December 2021

This time around the cover and back cover photo's are from my collection. Good photo's fit for publication are a rarity in my collection so I'd welcome any photo's from other Members that you feel would be suitable for inclusion in future issues, so please have a look through your shots and send them in. Old slide show winners would be obvious candidates for inclusion.

As always, material for the next newsletter can be sent to me at:

[newsletter@theymc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@theymc.org.uk)

or

[ymcnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ymcnewsletter@gmail.com)

*Cheers Steve*

## Committee Matters

There has again been little activity to report on but what has been discussed appears below.

Thornfield House in Morley is normally the venue for Committee meetings and Photo Shows and at the time of writing West Yorkshire is in Covid Tier 3. Thornfield House is principally a masonic hall and the masonic authorities have instructed that masonic meetings are suspended in Tiers 2 and 3. This means that should West Yorkshire drop to Tier 2 the premises would remain closed.

This obviously has implications for the club activities which take place there. Committee meetings will continue to operate via the Zoom system and although ways of holding the January Photo Show on-line are being investigated, an alternative has yet to be finalised.

The Coniston hut remains closed. There have been several enquiries in the past about possible re-opening dates but members will appreciate that this is not likely to happen until Covid-19 restrictions change. But there has been a cause of concern related to this. During essential maintenance activities in October, evidence of the hut being used by a member during the period of closure was discovered.

**This is not acceptable and the Committee has stressed that until further notice, the premises can be visited for maintenance visits only.**

The Meets List for 2021 was due to be finalised by early December, with the intention of inclusion in the next issue of the newsletter, TYM382, due out late December/early January depending upon the printer's availability during the festive period.

A decision could not be made on re-starting meets, particularly since a further lockdown could be a reality following the temporary relaxation over the Christmas period. Members will be informed of developments.

## Arthur Dolphin Diaries

Steve also received the information discussed here and has also produced a short article on Page 7, our apologies for the duplication of some points. Back in October this year, club member Derek Field alerted our Secretary that the Fell and Rock Climbing Club [FRCC] had been donated a substantial amount of material relating to the lifetime activities of Arthur Dolphin.

President of the YMC from 1952-53, he was regarded as one of the most important and influential figures in the history of British rock climbing, spanning the social gap between the old guard and the emergence of a hungry new breed of working class climbers. The Dolphin era, from 1940 until his death in 1953, produced some of the all-time classics of British outcrop climbing. The climbs he established are still recognised today as being among the most difficult in the country.

This material consisted of 12 exercise books which the FRCC termed as 'previously elusive diaries' as well as a number of photographs. This appears to be a complete record of Arthur's climbs from the age of 15 until just a couple of months before his death.

Bill Birkett, mountain writer, photographer and climber and also a FRCC member, photographed the diaries page by page so that they could be transcribed. Once this is complete, the FRCC have kindly agreed to send the YMC a copy.

In due course the FRCC are hoping to publish the diaries in edited and illustrated form and following discussions with our Club Secretary, the FRCC has welcomed the willingness of the YMC to become involved in the project.

## **CONISTON HUT and COTTAGE RULES**

These rules allow for the safe and secure use of the Club's Hut and Cottage at 2-3 Irish Row, Coniston, by members and their guests in the pursuit of the club's stated objectives.

### **Definition of Terms**

HUT: The facility accessible by the door on the left of the property. It contains 20 bed spaces.

COTTAGE: The facility accessible by the door on the right of the property. It contains 8 bed spaces.

### **Availability**

Both facilities are available for use by Full Members and Aspirant Members.

Full Members are allowed to take 2 guests each. Aspirant Members are not allowed to take guests and must be accompanied by a Full Member. Children of Aspirant Members accompanied by a Full Member may be allowed **but only at the discretion of the Hut Booking Secretary.**

*Members are responsible for the conduct of their guests.*

Spaces should be booked by contacting the Hut Booking Secretary on [ymchut@gmail.com](mailto:ymchut@gmail.com). A booking is provisional until it has been confirmed by the Hut Booking Secretary.

The Hut: - Can be booked exclusively or for a minimum six beds. Exclusive booking (including single room booking) will be charged at the normal rate for Members and their guests (two per Member), currently £4 and £8 respectively. Additional guests, or bed spaces not taken, will be charged at the 'commercial' rate, currently £10 per person/bed space. The number of Members and Guests must be given to the Hut Booking Secretary at the time of booking.

The Cottage: - Is available to full Members and their guests and Aspirant Members accompanied by Full Members. Exclusive booking is not permitted.

### **Keys and Security**

Keys (to the Cottage) are available to Full Members (subject to any restrictions in place at that time) for a refundable deposit of £20. Keys are **not** available to Aspirant Members.

Keys must not be loaned to anyone else and should not be identified as belonging to the YMC.

Keys must be returned to the Club on termination of membership or when further use is not required.

The adjoining door between Hut and Cottage must remain locked at all times except where the Club has exclusive use of both facilities. The key pad combination (on the Hut side of the door) must not be divulged to any non member.

All doors and windows must be securely closed when the Hut/Cottage is unoccupied.

### **Registration and Fees**

Immediately upon arrival at the Hut/cottage, all users must enter their name and date of arrival in the Fees/Log Book, located in the Cottage. Persons under 18 years of age must be endorsed by the responsible adult. This entry must be completed on departure and the appropriate fees recorded.

Then fees should be sealed in a money bag provided and deposited in the Fees Box. Payment is by cash or cheque (preferable) made payable to Yorkshire Mountaineering Club Ltd. A payment slip should be completed and enclosed.

## **Limitation of Use**

Animals are not permitted in either facility. This rule does not apply to guide dogs when accompanied by their owner.

Radios, CD players, televisions or similar devices are not permitted. Personal Music Players should only be used with the agreement of other users. Musical instruments should only be played with the agreement of other users. Projection equipment may be used for showing mountaineering/outdoor photos/videos with the agreement of other users.

*The use of illegal drugs is not permitted on the YMC property.* This includes any outside space/building owned by the YMC. The Club is required to inform the police of any such occurrence.

The total number of people sleeping in the Hut/cottage must not exceed the number of spaces in that facility. In the event of this occurrence (in an emergency only) priority will be given to those Members and their guests who have booked places.

Only YMC Members' vehicles are allowed to park in front of the Hut/Cottage.

Motor vehicles must be parked only in recognised locations and with regard to other occupants of Irish Row. The YMC accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to any vehicle thus parked.

*Smoking is not permitted inside either facility.*

## **Use by Children**

Children under the age of 16 must be in the charge of a responsible adult at all times. It should be noted that the Club does not offer segregated sleeping accommodation.

## **General**

Users are expected to treat the Hut/Cottage and all the facilities with due care. All breakages or damages must be reported to the Hut Warden. The cost of repair or replacement may, at the discretion of the Committee, be charged. Members are responsible for any damage caused by their guests.

Users should familiarise themselves with, and abide by current notices posted in the Hut/Cottage.

Shortages of fuel, cleaning materials or other consumables should be reported to the Hut Warden as soon as possible. Where items are replenished, re-imburement may be claimed by submitting receipts to the Treasurer.

It is expected that the facilities are left in a clean and tidy condition. Crockery etc. must be washed dried and stored; floors swept/vacuumed; stoves and hobs cleaned; fires cleaned and ashes removed.

All rubbish/recycling should be removed. There are recycling facilities in Coniston and rubbish disposal points in Ambleside.

Users should give due consideration and respect to other users and occupants of Irish Row (this includes no noise between 2300 and 0700 hours).

**March 7<sup>th</sup> 2019**

## After the Lockdown

In July we were free to go to the hill again!

And my son, Ruaridh had managed to get back home from Greece too, so life seemed to be returning to normality. He had work in Scoraig, so that gave me direction to plan some outings. I would be his transport as buses weren't running much of a service (does it ever up here?).

I've been gradually exploring the Corbetts over the years, and my drive to get back out on the hills had been honed by the shackles of recent government policy. They were to be my quarry. I packed my new car for overnight accommodation and off we went. The car, by the way, had been purchased with the intention of sleeping in the back. Though a campervan would be more luxurious, in my mind they have become the scourge of Scotland and I am glad to get away from the kitchen sink, not take it with me!

From Inverness I took the Ullapool road, turning at the Braemore junction along the Destitution road.

As we reached the west coast, the car parks became less rammed with vehicles. And dropping Ruaridh at the slipway for his boat crossing, I drove through darkening skies to Poolewe.

I was thinking of doing Beinn Airigh Charr which sits on the north west shore of Loch Maree. Pulling into the almost empty car park by the river I felt the strong winds rock the car and dark clouds were gathered on the Fisherfield summits. The decision took a while, but with a loss of self confidence which I put down to my recent incarceration, I thought 'not today'. It was late in the day so a more accessible hill was needed.

I drove around the loch to the Beinn Eighe nature reserve and started up Ruadh-stac Beag (896m), a hill I'd failed on last year due to deep snow. The track is stony and good though the weather wetted and chilled me as I ascended. I love the granny pines up here which grow only in the river ravines, where the deer can't get them. And over my shoulder stood proud Slioch with a grey hat of storm cloud. Great views, but I was not reassured!



Eventually I had to head left into the pathless land. Picking the driest and most economical way is always a mind job, and underfoot was certainly soaked with rain and the quartzite rock harsh and jarring on the feet. It felt a long way around the back side of Beinn Eighe to the ridge which served as the easiest means of ascending the hill. And I then realised I'd forgotten my hat! I was wet through and cold, so put everything I had on in the rucksack, tying my spare top around my head as best as I could to keep it warm (see left).

Now this ridge is something else. No, not like the proud Aonach Eagach or Tower Ridge with solid, continuous rock. It was formed of fridge sized blocks of quartzite which were poised in a steep jumbled cascade. The ridge had a more trodden way up, but was catching the gusting wind, so I picked my way up the more sheltered slope to its side. Testing the larger boulders in case they were poised to trundle.

Thankfully the summit was clear, giving me bright views below a scudding grey roof of cloud. I sat for quite a while, enjoying being warm and snug in a crevice in the small cairn. I like feeling the hill underneath me, smelling the air and letting the whole experience of being in that place wash over me. This is so much easier when hills are done alone.

Chillyness had me up and skipping back down the scree...I found a good run further left.

The thought of brewing up back at the car gave me the speed to get back promptly.

There was no need to go back home tonight either, so I sat by the car; midge hat on with my noodle meal and brew and enjoyed my first post-lockdown car bivvy.

It felt like the greatest adventure!

**Cozy Phillips—Caledonian Correspondent**



Beinn Eighe from Ruadh-stac Beag

## Arthur Dolphin

Many Members will be aware that Arthur Rhodes Dolphin, a pre-eminent British rock climber of the 1940's and early 50's, was the first President of the YMC in 1952/3 and died in a climbing accident at Courmayeur whilst President.

Some of you may also know that the Fell & Rock Climbing Club have recently received a donation from the family of the late Marie Blake, of Arthur Dolphin's diaries. Apparently, these diaries consist of 12 school exercise books, are beautifully written and constitute a complete record of his climbs from the age of 15 until a couple of months short of his death at the age of 28. They record all his great climbs, including Kipling Groove, Deer Bield Buttress and Hell's Groove in the Lake District and his many climbs in Yorkshire, e.g. Great Western and Beeline.

The diaries also record meetings with the other great climbers of the time: Pete Harding, Bill Peascod, Jim Birkett, Joe Brown, Don Willians, etc.

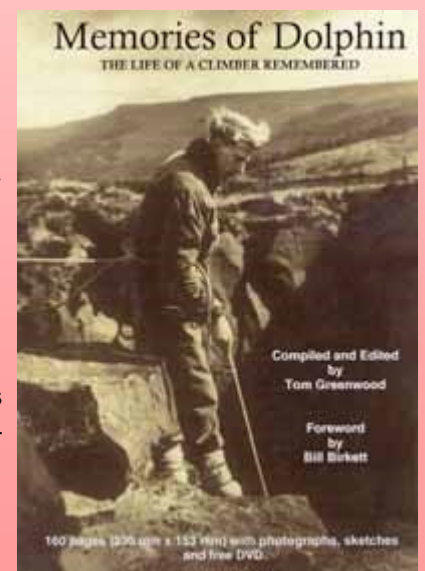
The donation includes photographs of Arthur Dolphin climbing Killing Groove and a number of routes at Almscliff.

The diaries have been photographed page by page and by now have probably been transcribed. See also Pete Stott's article on this subject.

The YMC printed an Obituary in the August 53 Newsletter, which I have re-produced overleaf. There were conflicting reports of the accident in the Press but what is clear is that he died whilst descending relatively easy ground having successfully completed his climb. It would appear that the YMC Obit. is the most accurate description of events.

Anyone wishing to learn more should seek out a copy of Tom Greenwood's excellent book "Memories of Dolphin" which includes a DVD of Arthur climbing on Gimmer and Almscliff. I am indebted to Club Archivist Derek Field for the loan of this book for this article. Unfortunately it is now out of print and second hand copies are a bit pricey at £30+.

**Steve**



YORKSHIRE MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

NEWS SHEET

AUGUST 1953 no 30

FATAL ACCIDENT. A.R.DOLPHIN

It is with deep regret we have to report on the death of our President Arthur Dolphin who was killed on the Courmayeur side of Mont Blanc on the afternoon of Saturday 25th July.

The newspaper reports came as a great shock to all who were privileged to know this fine mountaineer. There were two contradictory stories, which left us waiting for a reliable account to come through. This came a few days later in a letter home from Mike Dwyer who arrived in Courmayeur with Jack Blowers on the day of the accident. They were to have spent a climbing holiday there with Arthur. It must have been a terrible shock to them.

In contrast with the fantastic tales which appeared in the press, the true facts given by M. Dwyer are as follows. Arthur had climbed the Dent du Géant with a Belgian, and having descended the difficult part, they unroped on reaching easy ground. The two were not together when the accident occurred and were not in sight of each other at the time. Thus the Belgian went a long way further down before realising that Arthur was not on the route at all. He enlisted the aid of some other climbers and they went back to search. They found him in a gully. He had fallen about 100 feet on to his head, apparently after slipping on easy ground; so easy in fact that M.Dwyer says it could hardly be called a climbing accident. It is believed that his heavy rucksack resulted in him finishing up head first.

His body was taken to the Torino Hut, and subsequently to Courmayeur where he was buried. M.Dwyer reports that the local people were wonderful, exceptionally helpful and sympathetic. In addition to several other English people, a party of Bradford mountaineers who crossed over the top from Chamonix attended the funeral.

Arthur Dolphin was a member of the Gritstone Club and Fell and Rock Club, for whom he was editing the new Scafell Guide Book. His exploits on Lake District Crags are almost legendary, and his best new ascents set a new high standard of difficulty. He was keen to get on Himalayan expeditions, although he rarely mentioned this, and without doubt he would have achieved this ambition. He had been on the list of possibles for Everest.

In addition to a brilliant mountaineering future, he would have had, at the age of 28, a full and successful life ahead of him in other ways. He was taking up a new post in atomic energy, and was to have married soon.

He had been President of the Y.M.C. for just over a year, and during that time he had shown keen interest in the Club. His advice and help have been invaluable. His unassuming modesty, and charming personality made him an ever popular figure. The mountaineering world has suffered a grievous loss.

On behalf of all our officers and members we extend our deepest sympathy to Arthur's fiancee, Miss Marie Ball, and his sister, his only relative.



## From the Archives

*This article first appeared in TYM 223 in June 1991. It was also reproduced in the 50<sup>th</sup> Year Journal published that year. Personally, I loved it, humorous, informative and entertaining, what more could you ask for from a Newsletter article.*

*However, it was also the only article I ever published as Editor that prompted a letter of complaint. A long-established Member (sadly no longer with us) complained that he didn't know who the participants were due to the pseudonyms used. I felt that the pseudonyms added to the humour but maybe I was biased as I knew who they were, anyway we're all entitled to a view, see what you think.*

*One of the party (the Silver Fox) is still active in the YMC but sadly Makita Man passed away some time ago. Backman, the author, gave up climbing as his back never did regain full mobility and took to cycle touring ont' tandem with Nosh.*

## Moments in Mallorca

I sat in the restaurant in Puerto Pollensa along with my 6 companions. The room was dimly lit but, judging by the rate at which the height of the 'Mega Mixed Grill' was being reduced, I had a pretty good idea who was sitting behind it. As yet another pork chop was whisked from the heap, my suspicions were confirmed, it was Nosh! Well, why shouldn't she have a good feed?, she'd had an active day, in fact, she'd had an active week.

It had all begun with a bleary-eyed meeting at 5am. on Easter Saturday. We left Hartshead Services and, as we cruised across the Yorks/Lancs border, the hard frost outside made the prospect of a weeks climbing and walking on Mallorca seem a super idea.

The only fly in the ointment at the moment was me, Backman! The old Lumber Lordosis was giving me some pain and I'd been grounded by the specialist for 3 months, but at least I could do some walking and I was armed with plenty of Fujichrome.

Although the airport was busy, the 8am. flight from Manchester departed more or less on time. For Makita Man and Aqua Girl this was their maiden flight and it couldn't have gone better. The views as we passed over the Pyrenees were stunning and, as we stepped onto the tarmac at Palma 2 1/2 hours later, the sun was shining. We collected our hire cars from the concourse outside the terminal and, 3 hours after leaving Manchester, we were en route for Puerto Pollensa.

The Silver Fox was driving the Seat Ibiza, whilst we led the way in the Renault 5, our first bit of excitement was only just around the corner, - literally.

Makita Man had accepted my offer to take the wheel whilst I, having visited the island before, took up position in the navigators seat. Within 5 minutes I had us completely lost in the lunacy which is the centre of Palma. Makita, driving his first left hooker, was

obviously finding it difficult to accept that, after 35 years of driving with a lump of car stuck out to his left, that same lump was now stuck out to his right. Aqua Girl, travelling in the back seat, was quick to spot this anomaly and even quicker to point out that the pedestrians waiting to cross the road were in danger of losing their toes. Eventually, after removing the wing mirror from a parked taxi, Makita was man enough to concede that she had a point. Being mountaineers, we navigated ourselves out of the city by using the sun and the rest of the journey passed uneventfully.

By 1pm, local time, we were installed in our apartment, and a couple of hours later saw us all in the beautiful Boquer Valley. The girls walked down the valley to the sea, whilst the guys, still suffering from jet lag, attacked the crag with gusto. I held a stone in one hand whilst the Silver Fox picked for who would take the first lead.

I should point out at this stage that **both** Makita and The Fox led every single route of the holiday, the first ascensionist being required to lower or abseil and strip the gear prior to the second lead. The only advantage to the second climber, therefore, was the fact that he may have seen the moves. All the climbs are well protected by good bolts and all were led, on sight, without dogging, frogging, frigging, rigging, sighing or flying (unless otherwise stated). The guidebook used throughout was Chris Craggs' 'Costa Blanca Climbs' (Cicerone Press) which proved to be both useful and accurate

The first route was an unnamed V.S. to loosen the muscles and Shadeboy decided to have a go at this one on a top rope held by dad. He put up a stalwart performance but unfortunately, arms which are 2 feet long cannot reach holds which are 3 feet away without 'dyno' moves. Small boys are **not** permitted to dyno unless they are looking cool and wearing shades. These had not yet been purchased, but I could not fail to notice that look of determination in his un-shaded eye.

The second route of the afternoon was the imaginatively named 'Left Hand Route' but, at E3 5c \*\*, there was no doubting either its quality or the performance levels of Makita and The Fox. From where I was lounging it looked as if the hard training through the winter months was going to pay off this week.

The girls returned from the end of the valley having enjoyed a lovely walk and Supercook reported having identified Rosemary and various other herbs and Cyclamen. I was amazed to hear that anybody could actually ride bicycles up there!

Easter Sunday dawned fine and sunny and a visit to the crag at Calvia seemed to be the order of the day. Supercook and Shadeboy decided to stay and investigate the area around Puerto Pollensa. The rest of the team arrived at the cliff after a walk through the almond orchards to find sun-kissed rock, beautiful location, lots of pockets, lots of bolts and absolutely no people, not a single one! The atmosphere was relaxed but the routes began to fall:-

El Ultimodela Fila	E1 5b **
Calenaura Invevna	HVS 5b *
Pinchito Moruna	E1 5b *
Extra Fina	E2 5c **
Tu Polla Me Enrolla	E2 5c ***

It was more than flesh and blood could stand. Bad back or not, I just had to sink my hand into one of those pockets. The Fox held my rope whilst I led a V.S. and I top-roped the HVS and one of the E1's. I tried Tu Polla, but after 12 weeks lay-off? no chance! Still, thanks to good mates who gave me the opportunity to make my day.

Nosher and Aqua Girl had spent the day in their Playtex catching some rays. They reported that it felt good after 6 months of English winter and seemed to enjoy it almost as much as The Fox.

We returned to the apartment to find that Supercook had prepared a seemingly limitless Tortilla Espanol for dinner and Shadeboy did a fantastic job running up and down to the supermercado for more beer and wine.

Monday morning found me accompanying the craggies to what is supposedly Mallorca's finest developed cliff, La Gubia. The routes here vary from one pitch desparates on compact rock to multi-pitch epics in space-walking territory. The lads started on the single pitch routes and accounted for:-

Central Route	E1 5b *
Right Hand Route	E2 5c *
Sourisa Vertical	E1 5a *

and the very difficult Left Hand Route E3 6a \*.

I knew Makita was getting serious on this one when he finally produced his 'Makita' cap and donned it with the neb to the nape of his neck (a little trick he learned in France). Nevertheless, both he and The Fox took one fall each from the crux. I began to suspect that these two old codgers were competing a little, disgusting! with a combined age of 100 years on the rope this year they should know better.

On our return we discovered that the girls and Shadeboy had walked up the peaks of Fumat and Rola Blanca. Supercook had displayed yet another of her talents by putting the Seat through its paces on the hairpins of the Cabo Formentor. They reported having had an exciting day and it was around this time that Shadeboy began to sport a hat of which Beau Geste would have been proud.

Tuesday morning saw a party of 5 preparing for the classic gorge walk down the Torrente De Pareis. Having two cars meant that we could start from Escorca and emerge at the sea at La Calobra to a waiting car (and a waiting bar). Nosher and Supercook would be there to encourage us over the last few yards and little did we know that we would need it. After shuffling the vehicles it was almost mid-day before we commenced the steep descent from Escorca into the gorge, whose walls rise vertically to 1000 feet and narrow to perhaps 20 feet in places, impressive stuff!. Once into the bed of the gorge it is about 2 miles to the sea at La Calobra and no chance of escape. The going is rough, crossing boulders the size of semi-detached houses and false trails abound which frequently leave the traveller peering frustratingly down a 20 to 30 foot drop.

At the first sign of real difficulty most of the people who were around retreated back to Escorca. It was early in the year and there was talk of vast expanses of water further down which were impassable, with smooth rock walls on either side. We decided to go and see for ourselves.!

All was going well, Makita was assisting Aqua Girl down the difficult pitches with a sling firmly in place below her water wings, the rest of us were just lapping it up until, here in front of us, stretched a good 50 yard pool of icy cold water. Immediately I took to the

left wall where a steep crack and a seemingly horizontal ledge, seemed to offer an opportunity to circumnavigate the obstacle. This was OK for crag rats, but to attempt to take a non-climber up this wall without the security of a rope would have been extreme folly. The chances of any type of rescue on the island are virtually nil and this should always be borne in mind whatever the activity. Makita and The Fox had their respective family partners to consider and it looked as if defeat was staring us in the face - or was it? Echoing up from the bowels of that dreadful place came a faint cry and I rushed back to investigate. The sight which met my eyes as I peered down from my lofty perch was incredible. Three Scandinavians, wearing anguished expressions and very little else, had caught us up and were swimming for it. Aqua Girl and Shadeboy were stripping off before my very eyes and their intentions were obvious. Shadeboy was going to further his 12 year old education at the expense of the Beautiful Scandinavian girl. Aqua Girl was preparing to seize the initiative from our almost vanquished team. This was her E3 6a and she dived in with only '1 Friend' beside her. Magnificent though the sight was the sound of their tortured breathing as they disappeared under that icy, green melt water made me glad I'm a climber and not a swimmer. One of the two Norsemen obviously had a magical property and Aqua Girl said later that this helped to sustain her effort to reach the other side though, unfortunately, she couldn't quite put her finger on it.

The rest of us were not to escape without getting our feet wet however, and everybody had to wade chest deep in a couple of places further down. After 5 hours of hard effort, we emerged to the sea and the sunlight and I gallantly offered to sit with Noshier and Aqua Girl in the bar for an hour whilst Makita returned down the hair-pins with the trusty Renault. Not bad for an easy day.

Wednesday morning saw the girls preparing to visit the local market and Shadeboy decided to accompany them there. The lads decided on a re-match at Calvia and I went along to record their activities on film. The sun continued to shine and ease, what were by now their aching muscles. The routes accounted for were:-

Caguerra Perpetua	E1 5b **
Jota Jota	E3 5c *** (reputedly the best route at Calvia)
No Cal Senior	E1 5b *** (which I managed to top rope)
Chanco	E2 5c *** and
Nameless	E1 5b ** (again top roped by Backman)

On our return we found that Noshier and Aqua Girl had walked to Cala San Vicente in the afternoon whilst Super had prepared her 'Piece de resistance', a massive paella, ably assisted by Shade.

Thursday was the nearest we got to a tourist day and the whole team drove through the beautiful Sierra De Tramuntana and visited the towns of Puerto Soller and Deya before arriving, in the afternoon, at Valldemosa. Now it just so happens that 5 minutes drive from Valldemosa is the ultimate roadside crag and whilst the ladies were sightseeing, the lads visited the afore-mentioned, where the Dynamic Duo rapidly dispensed with:-

Roadside Attraction E3 6a \*\*  
and a new route to its left which they graded at E3 5c \*\* and which looked rather 'necky' from my end of the lens.

Friday saw a team of 5 ascend the highest accessible peak on the island, Massanella, 4400feet. The Silver Fox had succumbed to a nasty head cold and the Super decided to stay and offer what support she could.

Later that night, after a good meal, we sat around in the Bar Imperial drinking coffee and sipping cognac. As we gazed out at the lights of the yachts bobbing up and down at anchor, we reflected on whether the cost of the flights was compensated for by the week's activities?

Last Sunday we went to Dovedale. As we arrived and set off up the valley, it began to rain. We tried Burbage but that was far too cold to climb. Eventually, after driving 120 miles, we scratched a couple of routes at Lawrencefield, a dirty, overpopulated, hole in the ground.

I rest my case,

P.S.

Any similarity between any of the characters in this story and any member of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club is purely coincidental.

Apologies for the quality of reproduction of this article. I hope you'll appreciate that manipulating jpegs from the archive was easier than re-typing the whole lot.

Steve

### **A Gambol in the Gorge.**

I've lived on the edge of the Nidd Gorge for many years; it's been my playground, gymnasium and climbing wall. Full of secret tracks known only to me, deer, foxes and badgers that frequent the hill side.

Now in these troubled times, when I as an elderly person am trying to self isolate I find the woods full of miscreants, who obviously haven't heard the advice on the television to gambol responsibly.

A trip down the Nidd Gorge is highly recommended whatever the season, but now it is spring; a time when the gorge bursts into life, and so, I set off from my bothy, (or shed if you prefer), down Hall Lane, past Bachelor Gardens School and into open countryside. I avoid Harrogate sewage works by turning right onto the "Old Barber Line" that used to take coal to the gas works. At the cross paths I head off towards the old Ripon railway line, now one of the Sustrans routes, down into blue bell woods, turn right by the river and under the viaduct, this featured in the Paddington Bear film, but was also my private climbing wall, unfortunately sandstone, but proved to be good training for the Old Man of Hoy.

Following the river on a good track, I pass through swathes of Wood Anemone, Celandine, Greater Celandine, King Cup and Bluebells, what I am really looking out for though is Wood Sorrell, Jack by the Hedge and Cleavers, all edible, free and tasty in a salad!

Continuing through mixed woodland, I come to the old weir, site of one of the many mills that lined the Nidd. Unfortunately a part of this weir has recently collapsed and caused the river level to drop some six feet, (What a great opportunity to install a hydro electric scheme), so we no longer see the otters, but nature quickly restores itself and the mammals and birds seem unaffected, recent sightings being Heron, Cormorant, Pochard, Snowy Owl and the usual more common visitors. Seeing the damage caused by this minor collapse, I wonder what the torrent must have been like when the melt water from the last ice age created this deep ravine!

A short uphill section comes to cross paths, a turn right up Millner Lane, leads to the Gardeners Arms, but like all hostelrys, closed at the moment, so instead, I turn left, back to the river. Soon the old Boy Scout camp-site is reached, brings back many memories of adventure and true friendship. If only we had realised there was a naturist sight on top of the hill, we weren't all that observant. Nowadays, I'm not that interested.

So onwards along the gorge, past the very rare skunk cabbage plant (no kidding) and into Coalpits Wood; now not a lot of people know this, but Bilton (Harrogate) was a coal mining town in the 1600s, and is part of the forest of Knaresborough. Soon I shall have to make another decision as I will shortly arrive at a bridge over the Nidd, do I cross or continue uphill to the Beryl Burton Cycle Track and return via the Gardeners Arms.

As time is immaterial, I cross, then another decision, stay on the river bank or ascend. No problem following the river, so I ascend to the Scotton car park, turn right and follow the track above the escarpment to the site of the old Bronze Age encampment. This was the most southerly of the

Brigante's camp, but as the plaque points out was in use in the iron-age. More recently, due to the steepness of the terrain, it was a training site for the "D Day" landings.

From here, you can descend to the river or continue into a housing estate without losing height, either way you come out onto the Scotton Road and continue into Knaresborough. You now have the option of a bus back to Harrogate or descend to the river, cross the bridge and return along the Beryl Burton Route, the Gardeners Arms and into Bilton to complete the circuit.

There are many minor variations on this route; not much chance of going astray. The circular walks are of 3-6 or 9 miles, the paths are good, boggy ground has duckboards so can be undertaken any-time. An easy walk by club standards, but took some doing in the permitted hour. And remember gambol safely.

### **Ken Tilford**

*This article was submitted by Ken back in the spring during the first lockdown but got lost for some reason. Fortunately, Ken re-submitted it and I'm happy to publish what sounds like an interesting wander. Ken has also offered to lead anyone on this walk if they are interested, just give him a call. I suppose that if there is enough interest it will turn into a Mini-meet.*

## **Seasons Greetings**

On behalf of the Committee I'd like to wish all Members and their families a belated Very Merry Christmas and a more timely, Happy New Year.

It's been a difficult year for many so here's hoping next year we return to something like normality. Stay safe - stay sane - and stay healthy.

Finally, at this time of year it is customary to make resolutions and remember old friends. Over the years the YMC has lost too many Members to accidents on the crags and fells, not to mention to the ravages of old age, I'd like to raise a metaphorical glass to them all .

To absent friends - cheers.

PS - We've also lost two of the best climbers of their generation in recent weeks, Hamish MacInnes and Doug Scott. Thanks for the inspiration guys.



## Photo shows - 2021.

The proposed Photo Shows start at 8:15pm on the dates shown below at Thornfield House, Bruntcliffe Road, Morley, Leeds, LS27 0QG. All members are welcome.

14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

11<sup>th</sup> February 2021

14<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – Photo Competition

11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

If you've any rock-climbing or mountaineering photographs that you want show then please contact the Photo Show Co-ordinator - Rob Dracup. Please also check the YMC website and/or contact Rob to ensure the Show is to go ahead.

### COVID

Thornfield House is currently closed and unlikely to be open in time for the January Show and obviously the February Show is also in doubt.

**The 2021 Meets List is reproduced below but please note that official Club Meets are currently suspended**

## MEETS LIST 2021

### Weekend Meets

All Saturday and Sunday Meets start at 10.00am prompt unless otherwise stated.

Please contact the Meet Coordinator if you intend to join a Meet or require further information.

Please check [www.theymc.com](http://www.theymc.com) for confirmation of start point details.

Meet Co-ordinators' personal email addresses and phone numbers can be obtained from the website membership list or contact the Meets Secretary.

\*\*\*\*\* **Please Note – Covid 19** \*\*\*\*\*

**Due to Covid 19 national and local restrictions some meets may not take place, or may change at short notice. If you intend to attend a meet please check with the Meets Secretary and/or the respective Meet Coordinator prior to the meet that it is still going to take place.**

**All meets are to be conducted in accordance with the current government requirements (legal and guidance) for social distancing and some meets may have restricted numbers.**

**Attendance at any meet at the Coniston cottage including maintenance meets is by advance booking only through the hut booking secretary.**

Jan 10<sup>th</sup> Hebden Bridge. Hardcastle Crags ~ Blake Dean Environs. South Pennines.  
GR SD 988 291. National Trust public car park at Midgehole - HX7 7AA.  
Kath & Graham Willis.

- Jan 15th Coniston Hut – Housekeeping Meet. (2 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Jan 31<sup>st</sup> Langfield Edge & Stoodley Pike Environs. South Pennines. - GR SD 957 233  
From Mankinholes. Roadside parking by .Lumbutts Methodist Church on Mankinholes Bank  
(Road between Mankinholes & Lumbutts). OL14 6JA  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Feb 14<sup>th</sup> Kettlewell. Yorks Dales.  
Village centre YDNP car park SD 967 722. - BD23 5QZ.  
Eve & Steve Bartlett.
- Feb 28<sup>th</sup> Scar House Reservoir, Nidderdale. Yorks Dales.  
Main Yorks Water car park adjacent reservoir. HG3 5SW - GR SE 069 766  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Mar 14<sup>th</sup> Grassington. Yorks Dales.  
YD National Park Car Park Grassington village. BD23 5LB. - GR SD 002 637.  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Mar 28<sup>th</sup> Alderman's Hill, Pots & Pans, Cotton Famine Road. Peak District.  
Bin Green Car Park, above Dovestones Reservoir. OL3 7NN.- GR SE 017 044  
Eve & Steve Bartlett.
- Apr 2nd Easter Meet Coniston Hut (4 Nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Apr 16<sup>th</sup> Coniston Hut – Housekeeping Meet. (2 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Apr 25<sup>th</sup> Thixendale. Yorks Wolds.  
Roadside parking in Thixendale village. YO17 9TJ - GR SE 841 611  
Ben Gilbert & Graham Willis.
- May 16<sup>th</sup> Kinder Scout – Seal & Ashop Edges, Snake Path. Peak District.  
Birchen Clough car park on Snake Road. Approx post code S33 0AB.  
GR SK109 914  
Eve & Steve Bartlett.
- May 29th Spring Bank Holiday Hut Meet (7 Nights) – Provisional to be confirmed.
- June 6<sup>th</sup> Crookrise Crag & Embsay Moor. Yorks Dales.  
Embsay village car park. BD23 6RE - GR SE 009 538  
Derek Field.

- June 13<sup>th</sup> Black Hill. Peak District.  
Digley Reservoir car park. Approx post code HD9 2RX - GR SE 109 067  
Jennifer & Peter Tennant.
- June 20<sup>th</sup> Cam Fell, Cam High Road & Dodd Fell. Yorks Dales.  
Road side parking on Oughtershaw Road above Oughtershaw village.  
Approx post code BD23 5JR - GR SD 859 837  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- June 25<sup>th</sup> Coniston Hut – Housekeeping Meet. (2 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- July 11<sup>th</sup> Sutton Bank, Whitestone Cliff, Gormire Lake. NY Moors.  
Sutton Bank National Park Centre. Y07 2EH – GR SE 516 830  
Henry Beevers.
- July 25<sup>th</sup> Great Shunner Fell & Lovely Seat, Hardraw. Wensleydale. Yorks Dales.  
Roadside parking west of Hardraw village. DL8 3LZ – GR SD 866 911  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Aug 1<sup>st</sup> Ingleborough. Yorks Dales  
YDNP car park in Clapham village. LA2 8EF – GR SD 745 692  
Natasha Cook.
- Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> Margery Hill. Ladybower Reservoir. Peak District.  
Fairholmes visitors centre car park. Post Code S33 0AQ - GR SK172893  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Aug 28<sup>th</sup> Switzerland (7 nights) - Details to be confirmed.  
Andrew Drury.
- Sept 12<sup>th</sup> Chop Gate & Cold Moor. Bilsdale. NY Moors.  
Village Hall Car Park SE559 993  
Ben Gilbert & Graham Willis.
- Sept 24<sup>th</sup> Wales Provisional Hut Weekend (2 nights).  
Details to be confirmed.
- Oct 1<sup>st</sup> Coniston Hut – Housekeeping Meet. (2 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Oct 10<sup>th</sup> Scugdale & Wainstones. NY Moors.  
Roadside Parking TBC  
Henry Beevers.



- Oct 24<sup>th</sup> Castleton. Peak District.  
Castleton village car park. S33 8WN – GR SK 149 830 or road side parking  
Kath & Graham Willis.
- Nov 5<sup>th</sup> Coniston Hut – Club Bonfire Meet. (2 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Nov 21<sup>st</sup> Pateley Bridge. Nidderdale. Yorks Dales.  
Town centre car parking.  
Eve & Steve Bartlett.
- Dec 12<sup>th</sup> Xmas Fuddle Walk - Barden Moor, Skipton. Yorks Dales.  
Barden Scale. Approx Postcode BD23 6AP- Roadside parking - GR SE 051 568.  
Derek Field.
- Dec 24<sup>th</sup> Xmas /New Year Coniston Hut Club Meet (11 nights).  
Booking - ymchut@gmail.com
- Dec 26<sup>th</sup> Ilkley Cow & Calf – Traditional Boxing Day Meet.  
Cow & Calf Public Car Park. Approx post code LS29 9RF – GR SE 130 467  
Derek Field  
Meet Time – 10:30am.

The above Meets are the 2020 Meets rolled forward.

There is no Scottish Winter Meet in the plans for 2021 as it did not seem worth the effort and financial risk of booking anywhere especially with travel north of the border likely to remain restricted in Jan/Feb/Mar 2021.

Sean Kelly who has run the May Spring Bank meet for a number of years says the 2020 meet was to be his last one and the Glen Brittle hut isn't available in 2021 anyway, so a new venue and coordinator is needed. Would anyone who is willing to take on the organising of this Meet please get in touch.

The August Switzerland meet ran by Jonathan Carter in 2020 is now going to be run in 2021 by Andrew Drury but as yet I've not got any confirmation of dates or other details from Andrew.

The Wales meet in September I've kept on as being provisional in as much for the last few years its been very poorly attended and the Club has lost money each time. I've not made a booking anywhere yet until we know how Covid pans out so it's a definite maybe. Again, if anyone is interested in co-ordinating this Meet, please get in touch.

**Graham Willis**

**YMC Meets Secretary**

## Club News

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the club has suspended the meets calendar and the Coniston hut is closed. The committee is continually monitoring the situation and will announce the opening of the hut and the resumption of the meets list when it is safe to do so. See also other references to COVID elsewhere in this edition.

## And finally.....

If there's anything more that you think the club should be doing please let the committee know: by speaking to a committee member or email the club Secretary - [ymcsec2016@gmail.com](mailto:ymcsec2016@gmail.com)



*Save your club money and  
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Email us to get you added  
to the mailing lists  
[newsletter@theymc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@theymc.org.uk)*

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The Yorkshire Mountaineering Club - Founded 1941