

Tricouni Newsletter

Autumn 2013



Many thanks to the following reports from Malcolm:

Easter Meet 2013

The Easter Meet enjoyed conditions not seen in decades. For Katie and Richard, who obviously left Guernsey several days before the Meet in somewhat different conditions, the extensive snow cover came as a bit of a shock. Realising that crampons and ice axes might be useful they sent out a request to Tricounis attending the Meet to see if it would be possible to beg or borrow any spare snow and ice kit.

Little did they know that Tricounis never throw old kit away and it's understood that whilst they found the wrought iron crampons loaned to them somewhat on the heavy side, they were delighted to sally forth onto the slopes with a sturdy alpenstock some 5 foot long complete with reindeer hide strap. Inscribed on the handle was E Whympier. Tony Reynold claimed to have picked it up at a car boot sale for two quid.

Thursday 28 March

Richard and Katie went up Silverhow near Grasmere, through lots of snow. They found themselves crossing paths with lots of chilly students.

Good Friday

Chris, Vicky and Scarlett (Lincolns) made it to Keswick by 11am, so decided on some retail therapy and a long lunch in the pub; followed by wandering in circles around the fell above Seatoller testing out Scarlett's new mountain chariot.

The Wyatts, Stockwells, Peter and Tony met in Little Langdale and climbed Lingmoor Fell and Side Pike via Fat Man's Agony where Richard found it easier to climb over the top rather than to squeeze through the gap. They descended via Blea Tarn and Little Langdale Tarn.

On Friday afternoon Stuart, Kristina, Raya & Iris Clode, David & Joyce Clode, Sean, Jo, Francis and Edie Hopson walked between Threlkeld and Keswick on the old Keswick Railway Path, complete with all-terrain buggies and Monty the dog. The path finished up at the rather fine old Keswick station, now a hotel.

Saturday 30 March

Lincolns, Bob and Sally walked to Seathwaite and went up through some lovely snow to Sty Head Tarn. The path was more pleasant than 'usual' with the snow, and Scarlett experienced her first mountain nappy change just below Sty Head. Bob and Sally then went onto to climb Scafell Pike, descending back down the corridor route. The Lincolns descended Grains Gill, stopping for a bite to eat in the sun shine once below the snow line, (fortunately Scarlett doesn't bite, yet).

Sandi and Mark went 'bird watching' (Vicki observed that this trip sounds like that type of excuse people used at school to go for a dodgy ciggie at the end of the field).

Peter, Tony, the Wyatts, the Stockwells, Sean, Stuart and David Clode climbed Green Gable and Great Gable in beautiful sunshine. Ice axes and crampons were employed at various times by some although David seemed to spend most his time trying to get them to stay on (*probably because many years ago he had the smart idea of minimising weight by trimming his crampon straps to a minimum!*). The problem was that Sean, in charge of the advance party, seemed intent on making a diversion via Haystacks and had to be called back twice for going in the wrong direction (obviously something wrong with his GPS). Descending to Sty Head, the advance party of Sean, Stuart and Sam continued on and while Sean descended via Grains Gill, Stuart and Sam came back over Glaramara. The 'oldies' just went straight down to Seathwaite and on to Seatoller.

Further use was made of the Lake District National Park's 'Miles without Stiles' routes - this time Jo, Francis and Edie Hopson, Kristina, Raya and Iris Clode, Joyce Clode and Katie Stockwell did the circuit route round Friar's Crag, which had fine views of Derwentwater. Progress was slow with lots of stone skimming, tree climbing and rock hopping!



Easter Sunday

Sandi and Mark wandered along a stretch of Derwentwater

Bob Ling, his fiancée Sally, Chris & Vicky with 4 month old Scarlett on board and Peter climbed up through Rigghead Quarries on their way to Dale Head. In the quarry the party became separated. Bob and Sally wandered off to explore large icicles in the mines whilst Vicky breast-fed Scarlett at the top. Once the 'maiden wanted no moor' (*joke courtesy of Peter*) and Bob and Sally had still not appeared, Peter, Chris and Vicky continued on traversing round to meet the Honister path. At about 300 feet below the summit of Dale Head with Scarlett changing colour to blue, Chris and Vicky decided that the Honister Cafe had some attractions. Peter continued on to the top where he was joined soon after by Bob and Sally who had ascended via the direct route. These three then continued on via Hindscarth to Robinson, enjoying some exciting bottom glissading on the way and then down to Buttermere where they sank a few pints in The Fish while waiting for Chris's taxi service as the buses were only one every two hours and no one wanted to miss Richard Stockwell's 70th birthday celebratory drinks.

Tony, Richard, Katie and drove to Brothers Water and ascended on the west side of Kirkstone Pass to the Kirkstone Inn. Their plan had been to ascend Caudale Moor on the east side and contour round Caudale Head on the way back down but the snow and ice conditions looked more severe than they had expected and without ice axes and crampons they sensibly decided to retrace their steps back to the car. With all the discussions and agonising about the route it was not until they got to the bottom that they realised that they had forgotten to go into the Inn for a drink!

David Clode, Karen Clode, John Caldwell, Dave Prisk, Sean Hopson and Kristina Clode set out from Seatoller to ascend Dale Head. Sean and Monty the dog set a fast pace and disappeared out of sight. Monty ended up taking the 'Quarry Road' route and the rest of the party took a short cut up through the mining buildings. At Dale Head Tarn the going was slippery and the snow deeper. David and Karen decided to descend the way they had come, since David didn't have his crampons and didn't feel sure of foot. They ended up walking to Grange returning to Seatoller along the river. John, Dave and Kristina carried on to Dale Head via the 'direct' route - which they soon found to be very steep, icy and treacherous. Needless to say there was not a crampon or an ice-axe among the party, let alone a map (*pretty normal type of Tricouni planning then!!*). Somehow they made it to the top where they met Sean and Monty the dog, who had ascended via the more sensible route (*Monty was the only member having a map*) joining with the path from Honister. Sean decided to continue on to Hindscarth and Robinson, but John, Dave and Kristina had had enough slippery excitement for one day and returned to Seatoller via Honister Pass.

Stuart, Raya & Iris Clode, Joyce Clode and Jo, Francis and Edie took the open-top bus from Seatoller to Keswick - with plenty of bouncing around on the top back seat. They came back by boat over Derwentwater, but their planned disembarking point at the Lodore Hotel was closed and so they had to walk with the buggies along the shore-front from Mary Mount to the bus stop at the Lodore - the Clode girls were not in the best of humour and daddy was looking haggard by the time they arrived back at Seatoller!



Easter Monday

The Wyatts and Lincolns ambled around Buttermere in the sunshine and concluded business in the Fish Inn.

Vicky stole the keys to 'Badger' and discovered them in the top of her pack once in Windermere.

En route for London, Peter and Tony made a quick ascent of Helm Crag

David & Joyce Clode, Katie and Richard Stockwell together with Morven and Robbie Anson walked from Seatoller House to Grange via Castle Crag. Everyone except Joyce went to the top - it was Richard's first ascent in 70 years proving that It's never too late for Castle Crag - and anyway why not on your birthday weekend? Lunch was taken by the river at Grange, before returning to Seatoller via the river path.

Tuesday 2 April

The Lincolns went to the post-office (to send the keys back to Seatoller), then wandered up to Easedale tarn (above Grasmere). The plan was originally to go over High Raise and then along the ridge to Helm Crag, but with the wind getting up they popped over the top above Easedale Tarn and Stickle Tarn, returning over Blea Rigg and Castle How and down for another late lunch in Grasmere.

Wednesday 3 April

The Lincolns wandered all over Claife Heights next to Windermere, followed by finding a lovely pub in Far Sawrey for a late lunch (*there is a theme here*). Scarlett seemed grateful to be embracing the lower fells!

Thursday 4 April

The Lincolns wandered over Loughrigg Fell (Ambleside), followed by a good early dinner at The Angel in Bowness.

The above text was compiled from the various reports posted by members on the Club's Google Group site.

The various postings did contain a small amount of double recording that I've tried to edit out. The 'voices' of all the contributors are slightly different and the sense of humour shifts from member to member and this inevitably gives the wording a mildly disjointed feel but all in all I consider that it was a very worthwhile exercise in collecting the members' exploits in the absence of the Hon Meets Sec.

A very big thank you to all who contributed.

Malcolm Barton. (PA to Hon Meets Sec)

Brief Notes from a Big Powder Bowl



Tackling the
Fiacail Ridge

Jason, Jacqui and Fraser Baggaley decided to grab the last snow of the season and headed to Vail for their branch of the Tricouni Easter Meet. The honourable Past President did follow the exhortations to post the exploits of his group and the following is the result. He was clearly in an unusually communicative mood and the result was, by Jason's standards, positively verbose reaching the dizzy heights of 121 continuous words as can be judged from the following:

Good Friday – Got fed up watching Fraser ski away from me – I could not keep him in sight let alone keep up – he now skis with a mobile phone so I can find out where he is.

Saturday – skied. Powder day

Sunday – skied – put Fraser in for a lesson so he could be pushed. I enjoyed powder in the back bowls.

Monday - had planned a wee tour but had dug some avalanche pits the day before and was worried about pack stability, so went for a walk up behind the house with snow shoes.

All in all a great trip with lots of fresh, but Jacqui took a tumble and broke ribs, so joke telling not allowed in Baggaley house!

All those members who avidly seize upon each edition of the Tricouni Newsletter and read every word will notice from the account of last October's Meet, the chilling significance of the last paragraph of Jason's report. It seems as if every time Jason lures his family onto the mountains his dear spouse ends up in mortal danger and suffers physical and mental injury. Is this appalling phenomenon set to continue? Now read on.....

Breaking the curse of the Family Baggaley

A mini Tricouni Meet took place in the Cairngorms over the weekend of the 7 – 9 June. Malcolm and Patsy Barton joined forces with Jason, Jacqui and Fraser during a spell of excellent Scottish weather.

The first day (Saturday) saw the party going for broke with an assault on the Fiacail Coire an t-Sneachda ridge (grade I scramble). The climbing was steep and the rope was employed for the top section. Young

Master Fraser acquitted himself very well climbing with good style. Lunch was taken in sunshine on the rim of Coire an t-Sneachda. The view south to Carn Etchachan was spectacular – particularly with the Shelter Stone Crag in dramatic shadow. The post lunch programme involved a climb to the summit of Cairn Gorm and a return to the valley car park via the Cairngorm ski area.

The weather on Sunday was still warm and sunny and the party had a splendid jaunt ascending Meall a Bhuachaille before descending to the Ryvoan Pass. and the picturesque An Lochan Uaine (the green lochan for those unfamiliar with Gaelic) . Jason and Malcolm mischievously tried to get Fraser to skinny dip in this beautiful, small body of water. Given that there was still a lot of snow on the upper slopes it was, they calculated, likely to be on the cooler side of the spectrum. Had he been beguiled into this foolish act he probably would not have seen his vital organs until he was well past puberty since they would have ascended well into his upper body cavity for protection from the cold. However, the sly little beast (or probably he was just plain savvy!!) wouldn't oblige so they reluctantly made their way gently back to the car park at Glenmore Lodge.

The party had a great weekend and Mrs B managed to return home without experiencing any physical or metal injuries whatsoever. However, in order to "*make assurances double sure, and take the bond of fate*" (lifted loosely from Macbeth act 4 scene1 for those Tricounis of a thespian disposition) it was decided in early August, that the same party, taking advantage of a Lake Hunts Directors meeting, would absolutely lay the Baggaley hex by the ritual of an ascent of Great Gable via the climbers traverse. The Needle was duly 'threaded', Fat Man's agony conquered and various 'directissima' on Sphynx Ridge surmounted. Again, Fraser climbed like a true Tricouni (no map, no compass of course) and what is more Jacqui returned to the valley after sharing a rope with her husband but without the attendant trauma. It was decided that the Baggaley Curse had at last been lifted.

Twa pensioners hit the highlands

After saying farewell to Jason, Jacqui and Fraser in the Cairngorms, whilst the 'Baggers' crew headed south to follow the demands of mammon (or academia in Fraser's case) Patsy and Malcolm took the road west to the Isles singing lustily the traditional song of the same name. The weather for the journey was simply sparkling. Sadly, as they arrived in Skye, the weather that had held for two weeks broke and was replaced by more unsettled conditions.

Undaunted, their first expedition was in grey conditions along the coastal path that runs from Elgol to Loch Coruisk via the beautiful and isolated beach of Camasunary. The attraction was to surmount the notorious 'Bad Step' that is located just before arriving at Coruisk. Unfortunately, the weather turned to light rain, the wind dropped and the midge population increased alarmingly. Patsy stoically withstood the onslaught until just before the 'bad step' was encountered but as the midge bites formed a noticeable inflamed fringe around her face the nuisance became unbearable and a retreat was ordered.

The weather on the following day was dry but cloudy. They drove to the Sligachan to check out Pinnacle Ridge on Sgurr nan Gilleann but the cloud base made the route unappealing so they made their way round to Loch Slapin and parked below Bla Bheinn. In improving weather they ascended Sgurr nan Each before traversing the ridge to Clach Glas. Clach Glas is known as the Matterhorn of Skye and it certainly presents a daunting profile. From here onwards the route is given a 'Moderate' rock-climbing grade. The route is sustained and very exposed offering an exciting expedition. Part way up Clach Glas Patsy decided a rope might be a good idea and they continued upwards on gorgeous Gabbro using alpine rope techniques and largely moving together. Some of the route finding on the descents was particularly challenging.

After descending the section of the South Ridge of Clach Glas known as the 'Impostor' they arrived at the 'Putting green' which forms the small bealach between Bla Bheinn and Clach Glas. From here they were confronted by another interesting ascent up the north face of Bla Bheinn. Again, the standard maintained a moderate grading to just below the summit where they joined walkers on the normal route.

The following day offered good weather but Patsy declined the offer of Pinnacle Ridge. She pointed out that

they had climbed Bla Bheinn without seeing a single soul during the day until they intercepted people walking up the normal route just below the summit. Pinnacle Ridge, she decided would have to wait until the party size could be increased.

A couple of days later saw them located a few miles to the east in Kintail. Here they climbed the Forcan Ridge on the Saddle – another excellent ridge offering some interesting and exposed scrambling.

Dawdling in Dorset

To mark the 70th birthday of Jo's mother a collection of Mitchells and Hopsons decamped to the rocky coast of Dorset, staying in the delightful village of Worth Matravers (in no way promoted by the author of this piece for any reason at all <http://www.squareandcompasspub.co.uk/>).

Much outdoor activity was engaged in as coastal paths were explored, strange flora and fauna examined and pointed at, the sea was swam in, and a number of bits of rock grappled with. Time permits little else by way of explanation, but the following images are appended for your viewing pleasure.



Francis displaying excellent technique

A nearly 70-year-old ascends in style

