

## It's hard as nails

Welcome to the Autumn 2011 issue of the Tricouni Club newsletter.

The autumn meet and AGM is imminent, and Seatoller report some late availability, with one twin and one family room remaining free. If you wish to come, or have friends or family who might want to come along, please call Seatoller ASAP.

Included in the newsletter are reports from the club's last two meets, at Seatoller in Autumn 2010 and Easter 2011. Also contained here is Malcolm's obituary of club stalwart Margaret Chapman, who passed away towards the end of last year.

Those with good memories will have noted the absence of a spring newsletter this year. Partly this my own fault as we decided to move house at around the same time as this would normally be produced, but as can be seen from the table of contents, there is little extra activity from club members to report this time. Can I remind you once again to contact me with any plans or reports of meets or other relevant activities, or this newsletter becomes a glorified Easter/Autumn meet report (unless, of course, that is all that is wanted).

Lastly, congratulations to Kristina and Stuart on the arrival of Iris, born on the 13th June.

See you in a few days time.



Tricouni Easter Meet 2011



Dates for your diary:

- 21st - 23rd Oct 2011
  - Autumn meet
  - AGM 6pm 22nd October
- 6th - 9th April 2012
  - Easter meet

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Submissions for future editions should be sent to the secretary at [sean@thegasman.org](mailto:sean@thegasman.org). Thanks.

## Autumn meet: Thursday 21 October

Colin and Barbara Priscott ascended to Honister, Brandreth and Green Gable before descending to Styhead Tarn and then returning to Seatoller via Stockley Bridge and Seathwaite.

## Autumn meet: Friday 22 October

Colin and Barbara were joined by Peter Leigh and, in advance of the main group joining the Meet, they ascended High Spy via the mines and then turned up on to Maiden Moor. They traversed the ridge to Catbells and in pretty awful weather then descended to Grange returning to Seatoller via Castle Crag.

## Autumn meet: Saturday 23 October

By now the group was fully assembled and, driven by a range of motives and targets, several parties set out to assault the fells. Looking for the Autumn tints and not wanting to get a soaking in the threatening weather, Malcolm, Patsy and Caroline Barton, accompanied by Ed Mains and Tony Reynolds headed up the western side of Derwentwater to Keswick. They returned by bus with the young 'uns having to dip into their wallets whilst the 'wrinklies' smugly flashed their bus passes and rode for free.

David and Joyce Clode teamed up with Colin, Peter and David Baggaley and drove over to Buttermere where they took the Gatesgarth path to Scarth Gap. Pausing to take tea at Black Sail Youth Hostel they crossed the valley to climb up the side of Great Gable's north crags to arrive at Windy Gap. Here they turned towards Green Gable and the party split -some going to Honister and then Seatoller, some returning to Gatesgarth.

Seán Hopson fell foul of that cruel Tricouni joke where someone is given the intended route of the main party – but not enough detail for them to be ever found. Thus, in hot pursuit of David, Joyce and the others, Seán set out late from Honister hoping to intercept the main group. Scampering up Green Gable he quickly traversed below Great Gable and then went over Kirk Fell descending to Black Sail Pass. It's a pity he stopped at that point because he'd done a respectable portion of the Ennerdale Horseshoe. However, dinner beckoned and he was wearing full evening dress so he turned his footsteps back towards Honister and a hot bath. His parlous



performance means that hopes of emulating the Trevelyan and Trinity hunts has been put on the back burner for the time being because if Seán can't catch up with any one on the fells no one can.

Eve Reynolds and Barbara did a circumnavigation of Buttermere.

Sandi Ling climbed Castle Crag returning via Grange, Rosthwaite and Johnny's Wood.

Suzy Baggaley walked to Stockley Bridge following a visit to Keswick.

Jake, Jackie and Fraser Baggaley went up to Scarth Gap and then did some scrambling on Haystacks before returning via Warnscale Bottom. The highlight for Fraser was the discovery of a sachet of discarded tomato ketchup in the miners hut bothy when they paused for lunch. All Tricounis, even the very young, like to turn a bit of a profit on a visit to the fells and while a rack of gear or some karabiners is easily the most coveted find – a full sachet of ketchup is not a bad alternative!

## Autumn meet: Sunday 23 October

David and Suzy climbed Helm Crag on the way south.

Malcolm, Patsy, Caroline and Ed set off to do Blencathra via Sharp Edge in glorious weather.

Peter Leigh did the same route but for some reason did it in the reverse direction to the norm. Despite an attempt to try a repeat of the Tricouni trick on Seán that had worked so well earlier in the Meet and notwithstanding Peter's inspirationally confusing variant, Seán was canny enough to anticipate the ploy and easily caught up with the Barton party and all then enjoyed a grand ascent in great conditions.

*Malcolm ascending Sharp Edge in the glow of warm sunshine*



*Tricounis glowing following annual dinner*





## Obituary: Margaret S Chapman

Margaret Chapman, much loved elder stateswoman of the Tricouni club, died on Christmas Day 2010.

Margaret became a member of the Tricouni Club as a result of meeting and marrying her second husband, Vernon. The Tricouni archive recording the date of Margaret's admission to the club could not be located but she was certainly attending meets with Vernon in the early 1970's.

Margaret was a great supporter of mountaineering and climbing clubs. Had she worn a medal for each club of which she was a member she would have looked rather like one of those Russian Generals at a May Day parade. Her membership included the Barnsley Mountaineering Club, the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District (for whom she was Secretary of the London section for some time), the Rucksack Club and the Epsom Ramblers. She might, for a time, have been a member of the Association of British Mountaineers in the Swiss Alpine Club (ABMSAC) because she was certainly a friend of Peter Ledeboer who was a President of ABMSAC. Through this network she became friends with many mountain luminaries such as the mountain photographer Alf Gregory and Sid Cross and his wife, Jammy, who were well known mountaineers and keepers of the best known hostelry in Langdale – the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel.

Following her marriage to her first husband Lewis, Margaret returned in 1959 to her native Derbyshire and, as a young woman, worked for Jack Longland. Longland was, at that time, Director of Education for Derbyshire County Council but is better remembered

in climbing circles as the pioneer of Longland's Slab (V.S.) on Clogwyn D'ur Arddu.

Margaret made no claim to having done spectacular mountaineering or climbing routes but her knowledge of mountain places was quite encyclopaedic. She had a very impressive knowledge of the botany of mountain and moorland – probably because she was so very well travelled in mountain areas.

Those who knew Margaret could never fail to be impressed by her formidable tenacity when it came to attempting to accomplish the goals that she set for herself – goals that never seemed to diminish notwithstanding the onset of ill health in more recent years.

All this goal setting was aided by her consummate secretarial skills that led to complex note taking and planning. Margaret did not like to leave any stone unturned nor any contingency plans ignored. In the autumn of last year when she suffered a series of serious setbacks in her health she may have realised that her chances of pulling through were limited – or it could just have been another of her contingency plans, but she contacted Patsy from hospital to secure the promise that, in the event of her death, Patsy would ensure that her ashes were spread in exactly the same location as Vernon's. Following Vernon's death many years ago Patsy, Caroline and I had accompanied Margaret to the Lake District to help her spread Vernon's ashes in Buttermere. Margaret had wanted it to be a very quiet affair and so no one else had been present. Our commission



Drinking a toast to Margaret

from Margaret was to retrace our steps to perform this last act for her.

Thanks to the kindness of her niece, Margaret Metters, we had taken Margaret's ashes into our care immediately after the funeral in January. Feeling that Margaret (Chapman) would not have approved of languishing too long in a cupboard in Huddersfield we took an early opportunity to visit Seatoller House in early March. We were booked into the room that is known by many Tricounis as the 'hook room'. Our understanding is that this used to be the 'girls' dorm in the days when John Cockbain still ran the house and that the good matrons of the Tricounis used to assemble there to partake of pre-dinner drinks. Margaret always gave us the impression that this amounted to the consumption of copious quantities of gin and tonic. We duly assembled in the hook room before dinner. We were smartly dressed to a standard that Margaret (always a snappy dresser) would have approved and we duly made a gin and tonic toast to Margaret's memory and all the good times the Tricounis had enjoyed in her company. We even bought Margaret her own G & T as the photo records.

The following morning we drove to Buttermere and in beautiful spring sunshine, took the path that climbs steeply towards Whiteless Pike. Just above the path that runs off to the left to Rannerdale Knotts we duly spread Margaret's ashes. Looking over to Red Pike and Haystacks, the place of Margaret's final repose commands the most exquisite views of Buttermere and Crummock Water.

She had wished the affair to be quiet and intimate and we respected those wishes. However, should anyone wish to pay their own personal respects, modern technology allows navigation back to the exact spot - NY 17877 E, 17756 N. Alternatively, when you're next passing by on the way to Rannerdale Knotts just nod to the little grassy knoll a little uphill of the track – the thought would please her greatly.

Malcolm Barton



*Skiddaw from Borrowdale valley*

*October 2010*

## Easter Meet 2011

As scribe and rubricator to the Hon Meets Secretary, the chronicler of this particular report has, on this occasion, been confronted with some unusual challenges. Knowing that the Hon Meets Sec would not be able to attend the Meet and that he would himself be detained by pressing horticultural tasks and would also not be attending the Meet, the said scribe asked the President if he would jot down some notes about the exploits of the Tricounis. This was, he explained, intended to facilitate the recording of the daring exploits of members and to record for posterity those amusing little anecdotes that can, with little effort be readily turned slander or lies all of which sink into the depths of the Tricouni archive – there to rest unseen and unread until the day of judgement.

Anyway, the President being a member of the ‘red braces brigade’ in his day-job did what all good financial chaps do and delegated the task. In a burst of superheated resourcefulness the good ol’

President handed out cards to all the meet attendees and instructed everyone to be their own chronicler.

So as to limit the verbosity of members the cards were the size of largish postage stamps. It is understood that he only recently learned this trick of ‘controlled communication’ whilst attending a management seminar. He is currently working on a scheme whereby client complaints are limited to a maximum of 72 characters.

Just consider – the Hon Meets Sec, the Scribe, the President have at this point all deftly got rid of the task and unleashed the hounds of unfettered Tricouni hell and anarchy. What follows is, therefore, the result of several weeks spent with a large magnifying glass trying to decipher and assemble the resultant midget treatises. It is certainly unique. Thank God that the miserable whelp that is the Hon Meets Sec will be obliged to retire in October. And God help the next person who

## Thursday 21 April

**Members by the names of C, V and Bogey decided to thwart the President by resorting to pictograms on their card. Translated, it appears that they took the X96 Ribble Express Bus from Lower Moseley Street in Manchester. They disembarked at Thurlmore and ascended Helvyn.**

## Friday 23 April

**C, V and Bogey’s graphics for Good Friday seem to suggest that they started at Gatesands went across then up to La Pillor traversed under Kirkfech and Crumble and returned to the car via a mine (or might be wine).**

**Peter Leigh, the Wyatts, Rhys, the Stockwells, Roy, Helen and Peter met at Yewbeck car park and climbed Wetherlam, Swirl How and Great Carboot via Prison Band descending by ?? (the reporter has engagingly left this bit blank. This is because he is a member known for his parsimony when it comes to buying maps and his version is so old it is written in Uncial script and shows the Lake District as being in Viking occupation). They returned by Great Intake which was reported as being a hacking (knackering?) pull uphill for some at the end of a**

**long day. Apparently it provoked harsh criticism from Sinew who had been promised by great uncle Peter that there were no more hills to climb. Now where has this kid been? Any child of the Tricounis over the age of five knows that (a) Tricounis often lie and, (b) if they are not fibbing then they themselves don’t know what’s in store because many are so old that continental drift has likely changed the terrain since they last followed the route. Anyway the excursion apparently celebrated the first three summits that Sevvin had climbed on a Tricouni meet so very well done Siren. The weather was hot and sunny with a light breeze on the summits.**

**Joyce and David Clode went from Mungrisdale to Bannerdale Craggs followed by Souther Fell.**



## Saturday 23 April

C, V and Bogey were out and about again but today Roy joined them. The pictogram report gave way to joined-up writing (maybe the influence of Roy? If so, thanks Roy) so we can be fairly certain that they climbed up the side of Sourmilk Gill and from there went on to Green and Great Gable. They descended to the stretcher box for lunch where they saw Sandi and Mark. They returned to Seatoller via Seathwaite arriving in sufficient time to wish to record the unusual occurrence of being back early. (Actually the joined-up writing wouldn't win the calligrapher of the year award and they might alternatively have been remarking that they found the route easy or even queasy. Take your pick!)

Meanwhile Katie Stockwell, Helen Cross and Joyce Clode went up from Stonethwaite to Dock Tarn and on to Watendlath where they enjoyed the only sunshine in the valley. Returning via the Lodore Falls they crossed to Manesty and Grange in the rain where they had the obligatory ice-cream whist waiting for the bus. However, the bus never came but they were nevertheless spared the tramp back to Seatoller in the rain due to a rescue by Vicky and Chris.

David, Peter Cross, Jo and Richard set off early to climb Needle ridge. Approaching the box Peter had a problem with his log and the expedition was abandoned. The remaining stalwarts repaired to Shepherds Crag and started on Little Chamonix. This being Easter Saturday they quickly caught up with sufficient people to make a decent queue for the local cinema and they spent an entertaining hour and a quarter gently kicking small stones onto the heads of further hordes all intent on an Easter celebration of this classic climb. Our three did finally manage to finish the climb that was led by Jo. The hordes below apparently abseiled off.

Sandi Ling and Mark Champion walked up to Styhead Tarn from Seatoller. En route they met up first with the climbing party who were retreating because of Peter's leg and later with Vicky, Chris and Bogey. According to Sandi, Bogey is the nice guy from Cambridge who has a wife called Helen. It appears that they had been joined by some mutt called Benjie. As far as can be worked out, the dog might even be in a meaningful relationship with Roy. The Tricouni Club is certainly getting very modern in its

approach!

Sandi and Mark set out for Esk Hause intent on returning to the valley via Glaramara but poor visibility led them to descend via Grains Ghyll.

One of the Wyatts sprang from the loins of a solid Englishman (and Tricouni) but has gone native and now communicates entirely in the language of her adopted homeland. Apparently she is considering having all her body hair dyed black, is considering wearing brown contact lenses and affecting a stoop so as to look more authentically Celt. Here is Jenny's contribution:

Aethon ni fel grwp (Jake, Jaqui, Fraser, Peter L, Rhys, Sam and Jenny) Ian gabel Mawr via Slack Aaron ac I lawr y brif lwybr I Styhead ac yn ôl dros Pont Stockley.

Her Uncle Peter rather cheekily offered a translation on her behalf but stipulated that there would be a fee. What nonsense!! With the advent of the internet it was simply a matter of putting the above text through an Welsh/English translator. Easy! Here's the translation for those Tricounis who find the Welsh a bit difficult to get their tongues around:

"Curious group with much sweaty armpit (Jake, Jaqui, Fraser, Peter L, Rhys, Sevvon and Jenny) together with Ian Gabel singing joyously in hairy shirts up Gable slag. Stopping shortly at Styhead swum in detritus with gender challenged Stockley."



## Sunday 24 April

Sandi and Mark ascended from Seatoller to Dale Head via Rigghead Quarries. The descent was via Honister and the old road. The day provided splendid 360° views.

Our President, following the lessons of the seminar managed the entire report on his card with just 22 words. Quite an achievement!

He reports that He, Jaqui, Fraser and Peter L climbed Cam Crag Ridge with Fraser pioneering several directissima en route. Jason then reports going

over 'various humps' on the way back to Seatoller. 'Various humps' is a turn of phrase that will not go down well with his father, David, who is able to put a name to every rock over 5 cubic metres in size. Letting the side down here young Baggers! Admittedly, to have named all the features encountered would have taken the President onto another card so maybe it was simply a bit of a challenge for him to pursue his newly adopted post-modern minimalist approach. On the other hand the idle little sod probably just couldn't be bothered to get his map out and write down the proper names.

## Monday 25 April

Sandi and Mark did the circuit of Buttermere village noting a fine pair of Gooseanders sighted at the SE corner of the lake.

### A comment on future Meet Reports

There will probably be no future need for this form of Meet Report.

There is now a critical mass of young members (those under 65) for whom social media networking is second nature. It was, for example noted that the President was able to multitask on Cam Crag ridge and file his Twitter reports, post a blog or two and check on the Stock Market – all using his Raspberry whilst belaying Fraser at the same time. Fraser meanwhile complained that the route was a lot harder these days because one hand was taken up with his mobile phone as he necessarily chatted to his schoolmates back in Edinburgh.

All this means that everyone is so busy communicating the trivialities of life in real time that archives are.....well, just very yesterday. And self-scripted meet cards? Well that process needs old fashioned stuff called writing. Am I bovvered?

