

Sussex Mountaineering Federation



Newsletter

Issue 0551

Spring 2013

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Editors Ramble.

Tony Evison fulfilled many jobs within SMF one of which was editing the Newsletter, thus he could have easily have been responsible for this one, except that he would have probably have made a better job of it !!. He has supplied the Photos on the front page and the article further on, so read on and find out what it is all about!.

The SMF dinner went well I am led to believe, you will probably be aware that I was unable to attend due to hospitalisation with Massive P.E. and Pneumonia (That's blood clots to the lungs to you and me) , the surgeon said that I should have been dead at least a week before my admittance !. I told him that many of my friends think I am anyway !!. I'm glad to report that although I am unable to walk far I am recovering and was able to attend the last two SMF meets.

Coming up is the trip to Bishops Castle and then the SMF BBQ, so now is the time to advise Paul that you are coming, well I really hope that you are coming!!, He would welcome your early booking and your cheque made out to him, read further on for details.

You may remember that at the AGM it was decided to rebuild the web-site as the first step for a new membership campaign, well Louise and Sully have got to work and the site is now complete except for the emblem. Our first move will be to distribute flyers in particular hoping to encourage Outdoor shops to place one in their bags with each sale. We will also tackle the libraries, rambling clubs and climbing magazines etc. If you can help please contact Clive or Paul.

Hope to see you at Bishops Castle or the BBQ

Frank (Editor)

Cover Photographs.

These photo's taken by Tony Evison now represent a part of SMF's rich history. Can you name all the characters shown ?. Give you a clue, No 1 was at Trewellard, Cornwall, but when ?. No2 is more difficult although no doubt you will identify one still very active member, but who are the others ?, where and when was it taken ?. No prizes for getting them all right but see whether you can be the first to correctly advise me (Editor).

Subscriptions.

If you have inadvertently forgotten to send your 2013 cheque for £8.00 annual SMF membership to Ron we would appreciate your attention to it. The cheque should be made out to "Sussex Mountaineering Federation.

Forthcoming Meets.

28/30 June Bishops Castle, Shropshire.

This camp site not only has excellent facilities and a first rate pub within walking distance which not only does really good food but also has a micro brewery but it also boasts the finest all round view of any site we visit, the panorama takes in the length of the Long Mynd. Those familiar with the Shropshire Hills will know that the walking is brilliant but did you know that there is also superb rock climbing in two very different areas both within 20 minutes of the site ?.

Please book with Clive without delay on 01273 478941 or Mob 07710724018.

SMF BBQ, Sayers Common, West Sussex, Sat 13th July.

This is to be held by the lake side in Andy and Chris Baileys garden, Kingscot, London Road, Sayers Common BN6 9HT. Aim to congregate around 6pm.

Should you require further directional instructions phone Andy on either 01273 831861 or on his mobile 07557 771760..

Book with Paul Giles straight away on 01825 733358 or send a cheque at £7.50 per person to Paul at Fairstead, Coopers Green, Uckfield, East Sussex.

Limited camping is available in the garden.

26/28 July Breckles, Norfolk (Thetford Forest)

An interesting one this !. The first ever trip by SMF to the area, no climbing to the best of my knowledge but you will be surprised at the walking. The camp site is a small friendly site **but you do need to book with Clive straight away !.** This is important as camp sites are rare in the area unless you are prepared to take your own Elsan !!. See above for Clives phone number.

19/26 Aug (Bank Holiday) St Minver Cornwall.

If you have not been here before then it is well worth the effort. The camp site is large but excellent, complete with swimming pool. It is children friendly with their own play area and acres of space to run safely wild in. The Coastal walking is as good as anywhere you will find particularly around the Tintagal area whilst walking the Camel Way (a disused railway line) is a delight. There is plenty of sand and safe bathing in the Padstow area with a passenger ferry plying between here and Rock near our camp site. A good eating and drinking pub is a short drive away at Pityme (The Pityme Inn)

Book with Clive as above who will give you details of how to access the site.

Reports on recent meets.

The Easter meet was placed on hold due to a doubt about the camp site and bad weather (remember the snow ?) However meets to Exmoor and Dartmoor took place and it was good to see our french contingent represented with John Walsh attending both meets and Tom Harrison coming to Buckfast. At the latter we also had Pete Berry, Clive and Frank and Dick, Ruth & Jill from Hastings. This was particularly welcome and we really should endeavour to meet up more often. It was fun being with them.

Hastings Rock & Fell club, forthcoming programme.

15th July Ecrins National Park (French Alps)

Located approx 50 km southeast of Grenoble and 20km west of Briancon offering over 100 summits over 3000m including the La Meije, Mt Pelvoux & Les Barres des Ecrin. A weeks camping trip but requires booking now, for further details contact Nick or Dick.

27th July HRFC Beach BBO

30/4th Aug The Peak District

Camping at Hardhurst Farm, Parsons Lane, Hope (01433 620001.)

17/18 Aug Wales

30/1st Sept, Ladies trip to Folkestone

Possibly including a trip to France. Tel Kim 01424 813678

11/15 Sept Cornwall

Further information from Dick

Contact details

Dick 01424 716276 Nick 01424 813678 (Mob 07942 880858.)

Warning Ticks.

We have printed an article previously on this subject however the situation is worsening. Only ten years ago the number of cases treated at the specialist unit in South Wales was under 100, it is now over 3000 !!. The camp site on exmoor found themselves obliged to provide a removal kit available to campers as when. There are now a number of cases where although peoples lives have been saved they are confined to a wheel chair. These insects are mainly carried by deer but can also be attracted to sheep and other animals, they then drop off in the grass or on low branches awaiting their next victim and feed. Since they, like rats are a prime carrier of Lymes disease, a deadly disease that can cause death or disability you should carefully inspect yourself at the end of a days walk. Arms and legs are the most prone. On discovering one ensure that you remove the complete item and not just the head. The best way to do this is with tweezers making sure that you are gripping it well below the head. There are methods which involve a lit cigarette and or jel which apparently suffocates it but this is best researched before trying. At the risk of looking like a pensioners rambling club, precaution is better then cure, trousers tucked into socks and long sleeves buttoned at the wrist offer some protection.

Contact Numbers

Treasurer/Membership:- Ron Scroggins, Upper Flat, Tennis Road, Hove East Sussex, BN3 4LR Tel 01273 419377

Secretary /Trip organiser:- Clive Jackson, 2, Valence cottages, Valence Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1SA. Tel 01273 478941, Mob 07710 724018

Chairman:- Paul Giles, Fairstead, Coopers Green, Uckfield, East Sussex. Tel 01825 733358

Newsletter Editor:- Frank Edwards, 7, Stirling Court Road, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH 15 0PS. Tel 01444 247249.

Advance Notice.

25/27 Oct Brompton on Swale, Yorkshire.

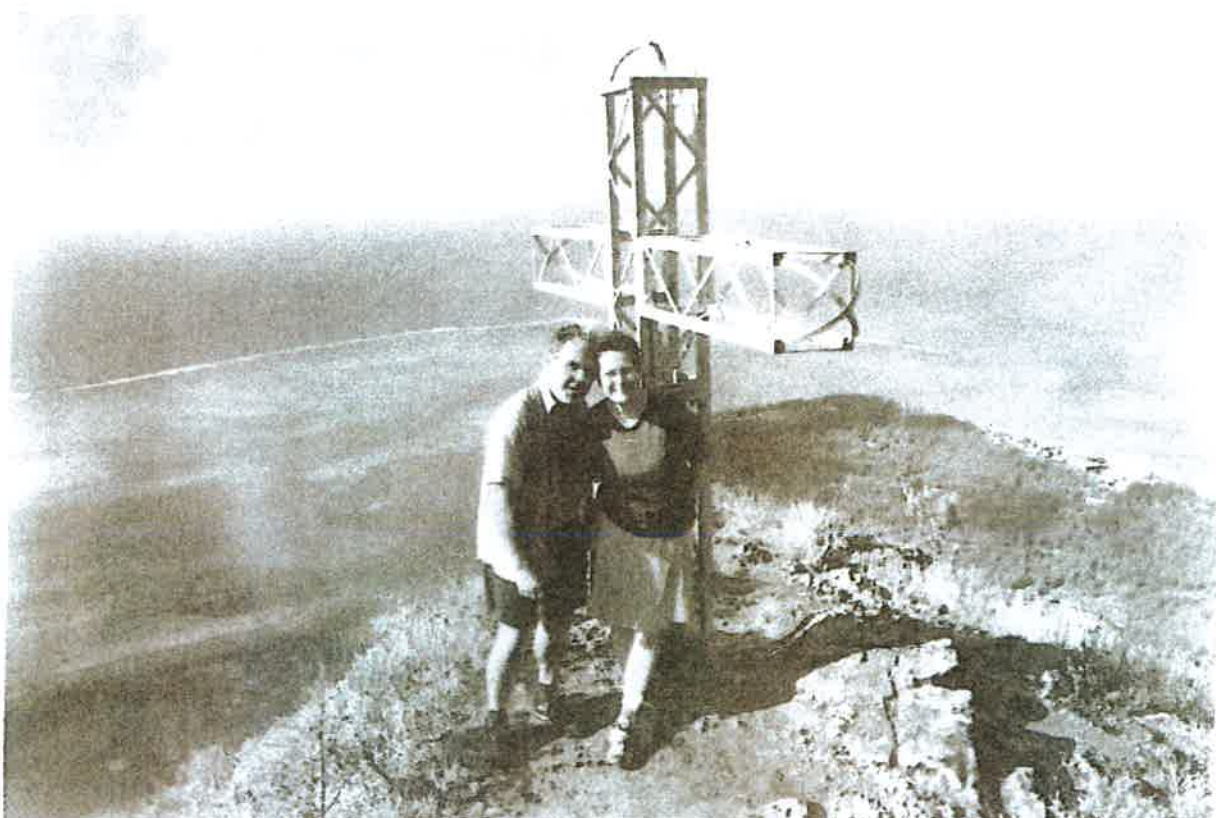
21/24 Nov St Johns in the Vale, Lake District.

Both these meets are camping barns booked for our sole use, however usually they are our most popular meets after the Christmas Social, so do get booked up It would help all concerned , if you are considering to attend one or both that you book early. The cost for each is £30.00 plus possibly a small donation toward the electricity and for the wood for the wood burner.

The following article has been submitted by Tony and Susanne

Evison.

They live in France but have recently been on holiday in Cornwall. Had we known we could have arranged a meet up as John Steven and Steph were in Botallock near Trewellard and the rest of us were on Dartmoor. However this is their story of a trip to Mauritius



Sorry we can't get you any snowy pictures from the Southdowns, but whilst you were freezing your privates off, the Evison's took their annual migration to the sun. This time to Mauritius which has been a dream for many a year. Intending to explore as much of the island as possible in 3 weeks, by not staying in 1 place but locating ourselves in 6 different parts of the island. A fascinating island steeped in history. One of the main objectives was take a stroll to the summit of le Mome Brabant. Although not the highest mountain on Mauritius at 556m, the highest being Piton de la Petite Rivière Noire at 828m.

Mome Brabant is of considerable historical importance. It is highlighted by an eponymous basaltic monolith with a summit 556 m (1,824 ft) above sea level. The summit covers an area of over 12 hectares (30 acres). There are many caves and overhangs on the steep slopes. It is largely surrounded by a lagoon and is a well known tourist attraction. The Mome peninsula was notorious in the early 19th century as a refuge for runaway slaves. After the abolition of slavery on Mauritius, on 1st February 1835, a police expedition traveled there to inform the slaves that they had been freed. However, the purpose of the expedition was misunderstood and the slaves leapt to their deaths from the rock. Since then the date is celebrated by Mauritian creoles as the Annual Commemoration of the Abolition of Slavery. Nice memorial monument to the slaves and slavery at the bottom.

The idea of the walk was that we just turn up, find a footpath and stroll to the summit although the final few 100 m looked quite steep. All was not as straight forward as we had first imagined and hoped.

As the mountain is on private property, a World Heritage UNESCO site since 2008 and only one person on the island has the right of entry to take people to the summit. Yan de Maroussem is the man, we found him and organized a trip. The pickup time was arranged for 05.45 hr to be up and back before the heat of the day. As he lives only a few minutes away, it was easy for him to pick us up en route. Picked up 2 other people to join the party and drove to the point of entry. Getting out of his pickup, he explained the ascent would be in 3 stages. Taking us from nearly sea level to about 1 third of the way up which was going to be slightly uphill and a leisurely stroll to a small plateau with a superb view. And off we set on what could be described as a forest track of gravel and stones under the trees getting steeper towards the famous viewpoint got the lungs working and woke up the legs. At the viewpoint about 45 minutes later, time for a slurp of water and appreciating the view. Yan now pointed out the second section and explained it will be a little bit steeper. If anybody didn't want to continue, they could stay here, in the shade and wait, as the return is by the same route. Nobody stayed (Susanne wished to stay but wasn't courageous enough to say so!). By then, it was about 30° and less shade. The path got narrower and steeper. At points a little steeper than Jack's Rake on Pavey Ark. Now and then fixed ropes were of great assistance and it became apparent that this was not a gentle stroll on the downs but rapidly becoming a serious scramble. This section over, Yan reiterated the same as before and now Susanne really wished to stay behind, suffering from the heat and height, first time she had walked anywhere with sweat running in to her eyes. Another big slurp of water and a little gentle persuasion (Susanne calls it being bullied!). I explained she'd only be disappointed if she didn't continue as it had been a dream for so long although it may now seem more like a nightmare. So off we set for the final section (the summit bid). The others 3 were well ahead by now and the ground got even steeper. All fours were needed and the in-place ropes were more than welcome in the narrow 1m wide and 80m long gully which is now becoming less of a scramble and more like an easy to moderate rock climb from which we began to see the summit cross. A final breathless sweaty effort brought us to the small summit plateau of about 3sqm with absolutely stunning 360° views over the unbelievable shades of blue and turquoise of the Indian Ocean. Well done everyone! This was as high as we could possibly go. Beforehand it was possible to continue to the actual summit using a Tyrolienne and then abseiling but since UNESCO took over the site, this is no longer allowed. Phew!!! "Thank the heavens for that", Susanne thought.

Soaking with sweat we stayed for about 15 minutes chatting and taking photos, a big slurp, a banana, the temperature was now approaching the 40s, it was time to set off down. Susanne was quite worried as she has never descended anything like this before. Yan explained the best technique as being more like a bottom shuffle facing out, the most secure for those not so sure under foot.

This worked well and fortunately the gully was well in the shade and once again, the fixed ropes were more than welcome. Worries aside, our main thought now was focused on the warm clear lagoon waiting temptingly below.

4 hours after the depart, we were back at Yan's Pickup very content and proud of our efforts, parted with 1500 Rupees (the fee) for each of us, and with tired wobbly legs climbed into his Pick-up, I had to travel 2nd class – outside on the back of the pickup– too sweaty to travel 1st class inside!

Back to our studio before hitting the lagoon where we stayed 'til sunset. Wonderful day out.