

Solihull M.C. – May Bank Holiday Weekend

4th to 7th May 2018 at the George Starkey Memorial Hut, Patterdale

A merry gathering of SMC members met up at the George Starkey Memorial Hut in Patterdale to make the best of some lovely May Bank Holiday weather.

Richard Hemes, Donna Montford, Su Downes & Ben Moulson (on the motorbikes!), Ed Shaw, Mike Dennis, Jo Dennis, Mark Hodson, Sue Race, Holly Jones, Alex Taylor, Rob Tresize, Kai & Mike G (aka Kevin).

Saturday 5th May 2018

Climbing: Most people went to Eagle Crag, Grisedale (Mike D, Su & Ben, Sue R, Richard, Donna, Holly, Ed, Mark, Rob & Alex). A long but gentle walk-in along the Patterdale to Helvellyn path. Several routes climbed including Grand Day Out (HVS), Morning Slab (HVS – tricky start and a wet crux with ground fall potential but fun! Possibly undergraded), Hawkeye (VS), Warbird (VS 4c), Sobrenada (VS 4b) and Kestrel Wall (S) to name but a few. Richard did Horse Power (E2) with a random chap whose second couldn't do it and much gear needed retrieving.

Mike D had a eureka moment when he realised his father, when he was at school, was put off hill walking for life when they were supposed to be doing a gentle walk up Grisedale and back, but ended up on Helvellyn summit via Striding Edge in poor conditions, trainers and no waterproofs. They missed a left turn near the kennels!



Richard & Alex at Eagle Crag



Ben & Su on Eagle Crag



Holly, Sue, Mike, Mark and Donna at Eagle Crag

Walking: Hartsop to Patterdale via High Street (Jo). Drop-off at Hartsop, headed up via Pasture Beck (lovely and quiet but chilly in the clag), past Raven Crag and up through the mist to the impressive Thornthwaite Beacon (784m), a great nav. point in the mist. Onwards to High Street (828m) and down to the Straights of Riggindale before a quick circuit to take in Kidsty Pike, High Raise (802m) and Rampsgill Head (792m) and all the fab views over Haweswater. A quick foray up to the top of The Knott (739m) before heading back down towards Patterdale, but decided to take in Rest Dodd (696m) on the way too, up its southern flank and dropping off its western shoulder to re-join the path past Angle Tarn, Angletarn Pikes and the long trog back down to Patterdale. The path down from Boredale Hause was an obstacle course of large sacks of blocks dropped by helicopter for path repairs but the ice cream at the farm near the hut was rather welcome.



Pasture Beck & Raven Crag



Thornthwaite Beacon



Straights of Riggindale, Rampsgill Head, High Raise & Kidsty Pike from High Street



Kidsty Pike & Haweswater



The Knott, Rest Dodd, High Raise & Rampsgill Head (cairn on right)

Sunday 6th May 2018

Climbing: 3 car loads headed to Shepherd's Crag. Most people doing routes on Brown Slabs area. Mike & Holly did 2 routes (Adam & Arduis), Richard & Sue R did Little Chanonix, Ben & Su did Arduis and routes on the Brown Slabs. Mike G did his first ever outdoor climb and Kai did his second (accidentally multi-pitch) lead. Sue R did her first proper outdoor lead too.

Mark & Ed headed up to Pavey Ark to do The Rib Pitch (HVS – good exposed sequence climbing leftwards across a face using horizontal slots onto the rib as a fine finishing pitch after Rake End Wall (VS) and Crescent Slabs (S).



Mark & Ed's perfect view of Pavey Ark

Walking: Fairfield loop from Patterdale (Jo). Set off from the hut and headed up via The Cape (841m) above St Sunday Crag, down to Deepdale Hause then up the short scramble to Fairfield's immense summit plateau (873m) for lunch (keeping an eye on lunch with a hungry Raven hanging around). Unbelievable views back to The Beacon and High Street to the east (yesterday's fun) and the whole of the lakes as far as Coniston and Scafell on the other side. Followed the rim round to Hart Crag (822m) and back down via Hartsop above How ridge, which was somewhat eroded in places and picked up copious numbers of banana skins left strewn at one spot. Crossed the A592 and Goldrill Beck at Bridgend to pick up the path back to Patterdale via the ice cream shop for a second lolly.



Fairfield, The Cape & Hartsop above How ridge from Hart Crag

Kai & Mike G / Kevin headed off to Scotland that evening whilst the rest of the gang headed for the pub for some good pub food and a beer or two.

Monday 7th May 2018

Climbing: A shorter walk-in was desirable for the climbers on day 3, so Castle Rock was a unanimous choice. Quite a few trundled up Gazebo (HVS), Ed & Mike did Direct Route (VS). Mark and Holly climbed Via Media (S) and Slab Route (S) on South Crag. Richard, Rob and Alex did Gangway Climb, Wall Climb and Slab Climb.



Castle Rock and a few climbers



Mike D waiting for Ed to start Gazebo



Ed on Gazebo



Ed at top of Gazebo



Mike seconding Gazebo



Holly & Mark on Slab Route



Rob leading the start of Gazebo with Richard

Walking:

Patterdale to Castle Rock via Sticks Pass (Jo). From the hut - up the Patterdale valley then north off the Helvellyn path at the noisy kennels to head across the hillside for Glenridding Mines. Crossed the river at the Youth Hostel and headed up the zig-zags, through the disused mine, through bizarre embankments filling the upper valley base and then up to Sticks Pass. Here one can see England's only ski resort which was built off the south side of Raise (now somewhat forlorn, possibly due to the rather long walk-in and general lack of snow). Continued over the pass and down towards Legburthwaite to find the gang dangling around at a scorching Castle Rock for lunch. Ed determined to get every crumb out of his sandwich bag, even if it meant licking out the oozingly melted, sticky contents for every last crumb.



Glenridding from Birkhouse Moor hillside



Sheffield Pike & Glenridding from Sticks Pass



Ski runs off Raise summit near Sticks Pass



Sticks Pass to Thirlmere and way beyond

Thirlmere woodland walk (Donna & Sue R). An uncomfortable night and aching back for Donna led to a 'gentle' woodland walk up and around Raven Crag. The gentle stroll involved clambering over fallen trees, shrub bashing and lounging in the sun just long enough for Donna to get truly back to nature and pick up quite a few hitch-hikers (ticks!) She even took some back to the café where they were brutally despatched and squished on the table next to the cup of tea and slice of cake, much to the horror of a couple sitting at a nearby table who promptly drank up and left the premises.

Sue and Donna were shortly joined by the rest of the group for cool/hot drinks and ice cream/cake before heading home. Mark was so focused on eating his cake that he forgot to empty his tray so everyone else could put their drinks on the table, until Ed unloaded it for him while Mark munched on, barely leaving fingers (or the fork) intact.

Fortunately, dining etiquette is not a strict requirement for becoming a member of the SMC.



Thirlmere from Raven Crag



Sue R does some timber scrambling