

NLMC Newsletter | March 2017

Dear Fellow Club Members

We're all looking forward to another great year of climbing in 2017. But before that all kicks off let's all give a big helping hand to Chiz and pile in to the hut for the weekend of 18-19 March for the working meet. The working meet weekend is good, honest, hard work and fun. The club is generously providing hearty food to the workers. In addition to the usual maintenance, we'll be rebuilding the old shed, ensuring its future, and adding another log store. Chiz is providing an enormous amount of energy. Let's see if the rest of the club can match him.

If you're thinking of climbing in 2017, I'd like to make a shameless plug for the meet that I'm organising to the Ecrins in the Alps, 8-17 July. If you like climbing, no matter what style, the venue has something for you. Bolts or trad, bouldering or multi-pitch, climbing or mountaineering, it's all there. Let me know if you'd like to reserve a space on the best meet of 2017.

Lastly, a reminder that most of the club communication is now via our Club Chat Forum (chat.nlmco.co.uk). If you're not on it, you're missing lots of the club news and dialogue. If you need help getting on, be sure to ask a friendly committee member. Many of the club meets are organised offline, so please remember to post details and trip reports on Chat so everyone can enjoy an account of your adventures.

I'd like to say a big thank you to all the committee for the tireless work done on members' behalves and especially to Manchi for putting this newsletter together.

All the best folks,

Khalid
president@nlmc.co.uk

P.S. I'm sure all the other meets will be quite good too ☺

Annual Charity Film Night

\\Khalid Qasrawi

This year's NLMC film night was held on 16 February, again, at the Water Poet in Shoreditch and raised £280 for Climbers Against Cancer. The line-up included:

Damavand - An Iranian Dream - Shirin Shabestari

A ski mountaineering team from the UK set out to climb Iran's highest mountain, Mount Damavand (5610 m). The team is lead by Shirin Shabestari, an Iranian woman now resident in Londo

Project Mina - Jen Rendall

A film by the fantastic director who brought us Operation Moffat, this one is sure to not disappoint

Wide Boyz: Staffordshire Nose

Wideboyz' Tom Randall and Pete Whittaker broke the Staffordshire Nose Challenge record, knocking two and a quarter hours off the previous record and finishing in 2 hours 44 minutes.

A Line in the Snow - Ben Tibbets

On the one of the wildest coastlines on Earth, a group of four skiers plan to climb and ski new routes.

Transition - Paul Diffley and Chris Prescott

Transition follows UK competition climber Natalie Berry over the course of two years as she makes the transition from indoor to out, plastic to rock and ice. Also features Dave Macloed and Lucy Creamer

What a great night. Thanks so much to everyone for coming. Thanks also to Jo Keogh for organising the event.

NORTH LONDON MOUNTAINEERING CLUB — EST. 1956
PRESENTS AN EVENING OF FILMS

PROJECT MINA
film by Jen Rendall

TRANSITION
CHRIS PRESCOTT & PAUL DIFFLEY
featuring NATALIE BERRY, DAVE MACLOED, LUCY CREAMER

IN MEMORY OF JOHN ELLISON AND
IN SUPPORT OF CLIMBERS AGAINST CANCER

FEATURING
PROJECT MINA LIGHT SHED PICTURES
TRANSITION HOT ACHES
+ FILMS FROM BEN TIBBETS, SHIRIN SHABESTARI AND THE WIDE BOYZ

16 FEB 2017 • 7 PM • THE WATER POET SHOREDITCH

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NLMC LIGHT SHED PICTURES CAC hot aches

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May The Forst Be With You

\\ Dave Kaufman

I'm a long standing member of the Club, joining in 1965 and now living near the City of Wells in Somerset. Mo Walker is not a member and lives near Salisbury. Last year we completed a 12 pitch, 350 metre, HVS in the Dollies and this is our story.

THE TEAM: Craig (my main climbing partner) and I met up with some climbers who were not part of our usual gang and agreed to climb together at a future date. Dan is a regular indoor climber and does some sport while Mo is way better than any of our little clique. A group of us climb together and have named ourselves the Frampton Faffers after the village of Frampton Cotteral (north of Bristol) where most of us live. Even though he's a better climber than any of us Mo was still happy to join in with our merry band.



The Frampton Faffer's Rock Tour 2014 (pictured above), from left to right: Andy (aka Rock Doc since he's a GP), Derek (aka Hon Sec since he keeps note of our routes), Andy (aka The Chockstone Kid since he dislodged one on a route once), me (aka Titus... too long a story), and Craig (aka El Capitan since he organises all the trips).

Craig and I are regular visitors to the Dollies. In fact, the infamous George Wilson joined us on two occasions. The Faffers returned in 2013 to enable Derek to complete all the Vajalet Towers in the Catinaccio district, since he'd done two of the three in the 1960s. Torre Delago made the full complement after 48 years (!) There's a good video of the climb on vimeo.com/145877322 which also features in the movie *Cliffhanger* with Sylvester Stallone.

Craig decided we should have another session in the Dollies and asked around our little group whether anyone wished to join us. Dan and Mo were the only takers. Neither Dan (with little experience) nor Mo (who is an Alpine veteran) had ever climbed in the area.

THE TRIP: Finally, 16 July 2016 arrived and we flew to Venice and then drove onward to Cinque Torre, near Cortina, where we spent the next day getting the feel of the Dolamitic rock. While there I felt that the best route we did was a IV+ (HS) called Via del Deidra (pictured below). My lead started on the crux pitch (bridging all the way up the corner) but although the next one, which was led by Craig, was supposed to be easier – thrutching up a chimney – personally I found his lead much harder than mine.



At my age of 71, I now find the walk-ins hard and the original plan was to move on to the Valparola

North region and complete a classic route on Cima del Lago but the walk-in was rather long and steep. Since we had moved onto the Falzarego Pass, we decided to stay a little longer. After studying the Rockfax Dolomites guide book, Mo suggested the south face of Col dei Bois which had a three stars route called "Via Ada". It was 350 metres long, graded V+ (HVS) and 12 pitches. THE CLIMB (Via Ada): The 25 minute walk-in took me 45 minutes and with plenty of puffing and rests. The sky was clear of any clouds, which meant a hot day. Although there were two Slovenian lads setting off up our route when we arrived, they climbed at our pace and never inconvenienced us all day, as well as becoming temporary friends.

Mo set off first up a V grade (VS) pitch, which follows a sheer deidre that provided superb bridging moves to a short crux wall and all completed in the shade. With a lot of muscle power and some technical moves up the wall we burst out into the sunlight and continued to the belay. Although the next pitch – which was my lead – was much easier, it was sustained at the grade of Severe and we both agreed that it provided great climbing. Back to Mo's turn and a not very memorable section which ended on top of a pinnacle.

Due to the weight restraint requirements of low-cost modern air travel we were limited to one rack and at the end of each pitch it was necessary to transfer the gear. While we swapped the quick-draws etc., Mo studied my next lead, which was graded V- (VS'ish).

"Ah" he said, "We can now watch your smearing skills."

From the top of the pinnacle I stepped onto a steep wall and worked my way around rightwards to a steep and featureless slab. A bolt was kindly placed half way up the slab and, yes, my smearing skills were put into practice with the tiniest of crimps for my fingers and negligible indents for the feet, but the friction was great.

Then onto easier ground, which had green waymarks to keep us in the right direction. This would have been useful if Mo wasn't colour blind and has difficulty identifying green or red (!)

The next pitch was Mo's lead and was given as a V+. I then followed and found the start easy and was sure that the crux would arrive any second but it never did. When I reached Mo he asked me

"Who writes these ***** guide books? That was easier than your last lead."

It's now the last pitch before we were half way and my first move required a big step across a sort of 'zawn' to a wall that was short of hand holds and full on balance-y moves, which us oldies like, and then delicately leftwards around a corner before rising upwards. This was followed by Mo's lead that was again a V+. He moved quite easily at first but just before the belay point seemed to take a while. I followed him to that point to a big ledge where there was a sheer wall and he was belayed just about 10 metres above where I stood. "The rock here is very different to all the other stuff we've been on so far and it's polished as hell" Mo informed me.

I tried several times to just get off the ground. "Do the best you can", Mo encouraged. I replied, "We're way behind schedule and we don't have time for me to do this in style. I'll just haul myself up any way I can". So, I grabbed the quick draw that was hanging from a bolt while Mo hauled me up and that resolved the problem!

One of the things we do when visiting the Dolomites is to carry two-way radios. On many of the big routes the pitches can be quite long and impossible to hear each other's calls. Both Mo and Craig brought their radios with them on this trip and we agreed on us all using the same wave length. It really worked perfectly. Especially when, earlier, Mo and Dan got down before Craig and me and we were able to get Dan to order some beers prior to our return.



Mo continued over easy ground and then, as usual, we switched gear at the belay in order for me to lead the next IV graded pitch. The first section was up a ridge before traversing to find a slightly overhanging wall with good holds. Just like an indoor climbing wall but without the coloured holds. While I was really enjoying the moves a voice comes over my radio, which wasn't Mo's but the dulcet tones of Craig. Now, Craig and Dan had decided to do a Via Ferata on the same mountain as us and then end their day with some local sport routes. I presume that they could see me from the valley and I know they also had a copy of the guide book. "Dave", Craig called, "the belay point is about 5 metres above your head". I replied, "Thank you Craig, but please... leave this to the experts" I won't relate Craig's reply in case children are reading this.

Mo's pitch was down in the guide book as 40 metres long and we were climbing with two 60 metre half ropes. I was given strict instructions to inform Mo once he had reached half way and off he went. "Half Way" I informed him over the radio. "There's only 10 metres left" I instructed him a little later. Then came back from Mo, "I've lost the route, don't know where I am and have belayed on some ledge. You'll just have to get to me and we'll work it out then". I set off over easy ground for a short way and arrived at a large rocky ledge before a short blank wall revealed itself. Half way up the wall was a metal spike used on Via Feratas and way above that was a chalk stained hold, which was an obvious jug. However, as a 5ft 6in shorty, these super holds were a long way off for me to reach. I looked around the ledge and noted a large flat boulder nearby. I stood on it and it enabled me to get closer to the jugs but I was still not close enough. I 'woogled' the boulder closer to the wall and I was nearer to the hold but not enough. Another few 'woogles' and adjustments, and the jugs were mine.

While I had been playing with my boulder, Mo had been scouring the crag and thought the route should have gone further left. I took over and traversed leftwards with no protection for possible 20 metres when I came across a massive ring. We were back on track. However, what was this thing in the guide book about a 40 metre pitch?

As I mentioned earlier, we transferred the rack each time we switched leading. This was often complicated if we had to share a small ledge or worse. Like most of us, I'm sure, we each have our

preferred way of racking up. For me I like my small wires on the first left hand loop, while the large ones are on the right. Then behind the wires are my quick draws. The next loops hold, on the left, my hexes and slings and the friends on the right. The remaining stuff is behind. I think, because of the rucksack being in the way and perched on a small ledge, I didn't quite get the rack set correctly. Mo noticed this but thought that was the way I liked it and said nothing.

I was to complete the penultimate pitch, which was a IV+ and it started up an overhanging gully but with good holds. Tired now but still ready for anything, I hauled myself up and then, still in the gully, stood by some twin cracks. It was an obvious layback and I set off using a good edge on the first crack for my hands and feet in the next. After two or three moves I arrived at a bolt. My hand reached for the quick draw, unclipped the crab and placed it onto the bolt. It wasn't a quick draw but a number 3 cam (!) Somehow, during the rack transfer I had not put it far enough around my harness. We'd had a long day so far and I just didn't need that cock-up but life must go on and, after some bad language, I placed a quick draw (leaving the cam on the bolt) and completed the next few layback moves to a super jug and hauled myself to the top of the gully and a large grass ledge.

Mo completed the climb up an easy chimney of about 20 metres to top out onto a grass plateau completing a grand 3 star route that was full of variety. The descent was down a loose and unpleasant gully but the less about that the better.

Finally we returned to the car to meet up with the others and transfer to the nearest bar for a cold glass of Forst lager (pictured below).

May the Forst be with you!



Valle D'Orco

\\Yvonne Sell

6am no alarm but suddenly awake.

Dim sunlight leaks into the van, I nudge Dale.
"Shall we?" "Yeah..."

Day 3 of our Orco adventure. Setting out before the sun turns the granite playground into a sweaty mess and smearing becomes impossible. We head out, pre-coffee, pre-tea, harness on, a sport rope, a few cams and one off-set nut. I head up the first pitch of Legolas, already climbed in the cool of the evening yesterday, failing to place the crucial offset as it seems to have disappeared on the harness. Dale is soon beside me, our heads both pounding from the hangovers and the heat already starting as the sun creeps round to light up the face. We finish the second pitch of Legolas variant. An incredibly smooth slab, with intricate foot work and good eyesight to spot the small seams that allowed upward progress. Just one pitch and our feet were aching and the sun was heating up the rock (and our feet) unbearably. We ab off and make it back to the van for breakfast and shade.

If you're looking for a different European climbing experience – not pure sport, not alpine and not busy – try Valle D'Orco. Nestled in a long narrow valley are a variety of granite cliffs offering every kind of climbing – sport, trad, aid, bouldering, single and multipitch of all of the above (well not bouldering obviously). Splitter cracks and smooth slabs as well a variety of overhanging crags are on offer. Every corner of the 40km long road seems to show another face, another crack.

We began our Orco adventure by attending a symphonic concert celebrating witches in the town of Sperone. My Italian was not quite up to understanding why exactly this town celebrates witches on 18 July, but it was free, it was entertaining and what the heck.

The next morning we decided to start easy: a sport crag (Frachiamo) literally next to the road with a range of grades. We warmed up on slabs and then moved on to the overhangs that quickly pumped our poor arms. Tired and happy we drove further up the valley to a lovely spot that would be home for a couple of days near the town of Pianchette.

This became one of our favourite sites, near a stream and cut off old road which meant no traffic but cyclists and workmen who stopped by for lunch. We did a few routes in the area on Piramide and the lovey Fessura di Tramonto, which ate up all our cams and still left Dale with no gear for the last 8m or so.

Avoiding the sun became the name of game, and one we weren't so successful at. We'd taken awhile to find the crag and so the sun was already hitting the next route. We headed down to shade and waited.

As the sun moved around, we headed up Legolas: a 5b 4 pitch route. Well that was the intent. We ended up doing some combination of a couple of routes and combining pitches as well, still good fun crack climbing with what bolts had been placed flattened. We abbed back down to start on the aforementioned 6b slab, but the failing light meant this didn't quite work so back to the van for a glass, no wait bottle, of lovely Italian wine.

After our early morning climb, we headed yet further up the valley seeking lower temperatures and more shade. The road carries on past Ceresole on a wonderful reservoir with lakeside climbing, and then up and up to 2600 m. Coolness at last. We took in the views and after dropping off some French hitchhikers headed downwards for, of course, pizza.

Back down to Refugio Muzio. We slept at a picnic area with... wait for it... clean toilets (!) Day 4 and we headed up Sole Automno (autumn sun) a 9 pitch 6b+; definitely our favourite route. Although somewhat discontinuous, sport and exceedingly bolted, it was a great ramble with some truly good pitches of intricate climbing. We topped out as the sun came round and we hurriedly rappelled back down to the cool beer in Refugio Muzio. Davide, the host of the Refugio, recognised us as the climbers and quickly supplied us with the latest topos and news about the crag. Definitely stop by, he's a wealth of knowledge and the beer is good.

We headed back up the valley, did a hike and slept at 2600m to seek relief from the heat. It came rather quickly when a thunderstorm moved in overnight. In the pouring rain we once more sought out Davide who recommended Bosco as a rainy day venue. Well, in my view, the less said about this crag the better. Couldn't get up a 6a even with a top rope, still, it does stay dry in the rain.

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There are a host of other intriguing looking routes on Caporal and Sergeant that we couldn't access because of the combo of road construction and heat, but a trip back in a less hot season is on the cards.

Things to note: the big faces are south facing and so 'shoulder seasons' are best; there's not that much easy stuff; there are almost no grocery stores so stock up before heading in; there's almost no Wi-Fi (although apparently the campground has some); dirt bagging is incredibly easy in this valley (we were never disturbed); and, the locals were very friendly.

Get out there before the secret gets out!

It's all Greek to me

\\Richard Haszko

I suppose it had to happen at some time. I'd heard about the amazing sport climbing on Kalymnos for a while so a visit had to be arranged, not least to see if it was half as good as Horseshoe Quarry in Stoney Middleton Dale. The island lies a short ferry ride from Kos, close to the Turkish mainland and was the home of sponge divers until recently; in fact sponges seem to be the thing to buy even now. A team was soon assembled: myself, Valerie Humphries, Marion Wintringham and Nigel Seabourne. Marion had been before, some 13 years ago but it would be a first for the rest of us.



We got to Kos with no problems only to be informed there were no ferries running due to the strong wind, and it certainly was windy, (not unusual in October) so we had to spend the night in the little town by the ferry port. This turned out alright as we had a splendid meal with copious quantities of wine, thanks to the generosity of the waiter. In the night the wind died so we were off

in the morning to collect our hire car and the short drive across the island to the main climbing village of Massouri.

Massouri has the sea on one side and a long line of very imposing cliffs on the other; in fact you can walk to many of the climbing areas straight from the village but most would have been too hard for us. Across the sea lay the island of Tellendos with more huge cliffs, but that's for another year. We'd arrived in time for some afternoon climbing so after checking into our rather downmarket, but cheap, apartments it was off for some cragging. This was to be on Kasteli, just a short drive and walk. Marion, Nigel and I did three routes up to F5c to get the feel of the rock and the grades while Valerie got the feel of the warm sun and provided general encouragement.



On the first full day I did a couple of F4s with Valerie, which she was pleased about as she hasn't climbed since 1989, Nigel and Marion did some 4s and 5s and then I led a couple of 5c+ routes which were steep and provided me with my first tufa climbing. Sea Breeze was the crag of choice the next morning, again a short drive but just above a glorious blue sea with hot sun and a nice little taverna for cold beers on the beach afterwards. Oh, we did some routes as well, the hardest being F6a+ up a very steep wall on exceedingly sharp crystals.

The charmingly named Hump Piste at Ouriana proved to be the only place not worth a visit: we did one route before Valerie suggested it might be a good time for a rest day (none of us are spring chickens, well, maybe Nigel who is a mere 60.) This suggestion met with no resistance so we hopped on a little ferry for the 10 minute crossing to Tellendos. 15 minutes' walk across the island

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led to a beach and a stack of loungers which we quickly assembled and proceeded to crack open a beer before a swim in the warm, calm waters. We stayed well into the evening, enjoying another fine meal before catching a ferry in the dark back to Kalymnos (they run until midnight!)

Elephant Slide in the Prophitis Andreas area provided the next day's sport and two of the nicest routes when I led Valerie up some lovely 4s before tackling some sterner stuff. This was a decent crag with great views and away from the crowds, which certainly can't be said for our final day. The Arginonta Valley cliffs are very good, shady and a short walk, which makes for great popularity. We went to the Middle Wall on which the climbing is very juggy for the first 50 feet or so, then steepens considerably to give some fine technical moves on pockets and sidepulls for the next 50 feet. Marion followed a 5+, Nigel led a 5 and I finished off by hauling myself up a 6b. Unfortunately the routes are rather squeezed together and it's a very busy area, at least until a week or so later in the season, but worth going to for all that.

Well, that was it. In retrospect we should have gone for longer but the logistics of getting there after that week are more complicated as there are no flights to Kos so the return journey would involve going via Athens or Rhodes. There are routes to suit all grades, the weather is generally superb, the people very friendly, the food great and not expensive (everyone eats out) despite the tumbling pound and accommodation is pretty cheap too.

Editorial

Welcome to the first (of many, promise) newsletter of the year!

I've decided to change the look of the newsletter (again) to try and make it a less time-intensive affair putting the thing together. Hopefully you won't miss Edna's whizzy graphics too much. And appreciate a more regular round-up of Club news.

I have to apologise to all the contributors who sent through material for the newsletter last year.

All your articles are going to form a commemorative newsletter, celebrating 2016: the 60th year of the Club. It will include lots of photos from the 60th celebration party, one of Martin's amazing poems, and (of course) plenty of climbing/mountaineering stories focussed on our Club members' adventures.

Well, it's straight back to the computer for me, as I get busy working on the next issue...

Happy climbing everyone & here's hoping for a year of good weather,

Manchi
newsletter@nlmc.co.uk



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Club Meet Dates 2017

Visit chat.nlmcc.co.uk/c/trips for the latest updates on each upcoming meet.

Meet	Dates	Contact
Spring Working Meet, Club Cottage & Barn	18-19 March	Chiz Harward, huts@nlmc.co.uk
Spring New Members Meet, Club Cottage & Barn	1-2 April	Martin Bull, newmembers@nlmc.co.uk
Yorkshire Meet	14-17 April	Naomi Sorrell, naomi.sorrel@gmail.com , or Tom Sorrell, tom.n.sorrel@gmail.com
Peak District Meet	20-21 May	Richard Hazko, rhaszko@gmail.com
Scotland Meet	27 May – 3 June	Chiz Harward, huts@nlmc.co.uk
Annual Summer Solstice Meet, Cornwall	24-25 June	Tim McDonald, t.p.mcdonald@gmail.com
Erins Meet	8-16 July	Khalid Qasrawi president@nlmc.co.uk
North Devon Meet	22-23 July	Jo Keogh, social@nlmc.co.uk , or Matt Hobby, bmc@nlmc.co.uk
Family Meet, Club Cottage & Barn	22 July - 6 August	Sara Spillett, bookings@nlmc.co.uk
Pembroke Meet	12-13 August	Max Adamson, treasurer@nlmc.co.uk
Autumn New Members Meet, Club Cottage & Barn	16-17 September	Martin Bull, newmembers@nlmc.co.uk
Autumn Working Meet, Club Cottage & Barn	7-8 October	Chiz Harward, huts@nlmc.co.uk
AGM & Annual Dinner, Capel Curig	11-12 November	Khalid Qasrawi, president@nlmc.co.uk
Christmas Curry, London	13 December	Jo Keogh, social@nlmc.co.uk

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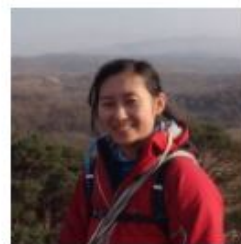
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