

FELL AND ROCK CLIMBING CLUB OF THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

Project: Rebuilding Robinson's Cairn

I am pleased to report that, on 22 August 2009, this project was completed and Robinson's Cairn was restored to the condition that it was in some years ago.

Introduction

When attending a Prospective Members Meet of the Fell & Rock Climbing Club in October 2008 I had walked up Pillar mountain via the High Level Route and seen the poor state of Robinson's Cairn. Part of the exterior retaining wall of the Cairn had fallen down, exposing the small "infill" stones which were spilling out. When I became President of the Fell & Rock, in November 2009, I decided that one of the projects that I would like to complete would be that of restoring the Cairn to its former state. My first contact was our member Mark Scott who made discreet enquiries as to whether or not repair of the Cairn would be welcomed by Wild Ennerdale, the managing agents. Mark's overtures were successful and he received a letter from Wild Ennerdale giving permission for the Cairn to be repaired.

Reconnaissance

On Sunday 17th May 2009 a small group of us set off from Gatesgarth Car-Park in Buttermere to survey the Cairn and generally "weigh the job up". It was a fine if cold day but we seemed to make slow time up to Looking Stead and across the High Level Route to Robinson's Cairn. We found the Cairn to be in about the same condition as previously and Colin Farnsworth pronounced the job to be "do-able". Colin was our secret weapon, a builder from Barnsley who is powerfully build and eminently suited to manhandling large blocks of stone. Also with us were Clive Darlow Colin's mate, also from Barnsley and Keith Wright the Fell & Rock Hut Secretary. Having surveyed the job, we decided that the better approach would be from Wasdale, and determined to do the job sometime in August.

Rebuilding

Saturday 22nd August 2009 saw nine of us set off from the Fell & Rock Hut at Brackenclose in Wasdale. Six of us would work on the Cairn whilst the three others would either walk up Pillar Mountain or climb on Pillar Rock. We arrived at the Cairn at 11.30am and soon realised that we would have to take the Cairn down to its foundations on the south-east side where it had collapsed. Colin was in charge, whilst Clive, myself, Wyn Mason, Christine Robinson and Nick Cutts (three FRCC prospective members) brought stones from far and wide. By 12.30pm the Cairn was reduced to its foundations (see photo) but by 2pm we had rebuilt and finished the job. We tried to take a photographic record of the stages and the finished product (see photographs). We were encouraged in our efforts by former President Paddy O'Neill and his wife (and daughter of past President Donald Murray) Janet.

Conclusion

This was a small project that took one day out of my climbing year, but gave me one good mountain day in return. The happy coincidence of having the same name as the much more famous Original Vice-President gave me the incentive consider the project. Colin Farnsworth provided the know-how and muscle power and the others the enthusiasm and labour.

Yours sincerely

John Robinson, President

Photos





Industrial and Provident Societies Registration No 30506