



# Valley News

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF AVON VALLEY RUNNERS (72) APRIL 2004

*A trek to view . . .*

## THE TOP OF THE WORLD

*Fay Merrell*

On Sunday 12 October 2003 at 10.23 a.m. I reached the top of Kala Pattar. At a height of 5,545 metres it is 3,305 metres short of the top of the world — the summit of Mount Everest. However, from this vantage-point I had the most amazing view of the top of Everest and two other enormous peaks — Nuptse (7,896 metres) and Lhotse (8,501 metres), plus the Khumbu Glacier (the site of Everest base camp) and other smaller peaks.

To reach Kala Pattar, I, along with fifteen other trekkers, a guide and six sherpas, had spent nine days walking from the village of Lukla at 2,800 metres, staying in lodges. These are wooden buildings, each with a communal living/dining-room, a kitchen and bedrooms, some of which are dormitories, similar to youth hostels. Some have inside loos and some have showers, but everything is very basic. Most have electric lighting in the main rooms, but not usually in the bedrooms, so a head torch is a vital piece of equipment.

Loos in the lodges aren't too bad, but outside ones are "gut-wrenching". You took a gamble if you had a shower, as you might not get hot water, or it might run out mid-shower! Food was not too bad at lower altitude, the variety and quality better than I thought it would be, but it deteriorated the higher you got, and the choice diminished; everything was based on potatoes, rice, pasta and noodles — mountains [!] of it. Carbohydrates had to be eaten in large quantities for energy, as calories are burnt very fast at high altitude. We were consuming 7,000–8,000 calories each day plus six to seven litres of liquid, mainly water. This level is needed to help reduce the risk of getting altitude sickness.

Our kitbags were carried by zoes lower down and yaks higher up. A zoe is a cross between a cow and a yak, supposedly more versatile than yaks, which don't survive very well at lower altitudes. Both look adorable and cuddly, particularly the yaks with their long, thick, shaggy coats, but beware — they are not friendly — in fact, given half a chance they will gore you with their powerful horns. One has been known to puncture the lungs of a sherpa.

Dangerous yaks, stodgy food, stinking loos — it doesn't sound like much of a holiday — but the magnificent scenery more than made up for it. We walked through thick forests, saw numerous waterfalls, wildflowers in abundance, and criss-crossed (over high bridges — not for those frightened of heights) the beautiful, wild, fast-flowing Dudh Kosi (Milk River), so named because it is very frothy in places due to the speed of the water over huge boulders. The scenery changed from forests to alpine meadows to barren moorland; then finally it was almost lunar. On the tenth day we arrived at Everest base camp (5,335 metres) after about three hours of walking, two-thirds of it on the glacier, sometimes scabbling over boulders.

At base camp we couldn't see the top of Everest, but were surrounded by huge snow-covered peaks. We were blessed with perfect weather: brilliant sunshine and the most amazing dark-blue sky; also it was very warm, which I hadn't expected. Occasionally we heard the bang and rumble of an avalanche, and a couple of times saw snow pouring down the side of one of the mountains.

There were two expeditions at base camp, one having been to the top and the other preparing to go up, so there were lots of tents and equipment dotted about on the glacier. The tents were precariously perched on rough rocks and scree and we had to be very careful walking around as there were quite a few crevasses. We were able to peer inside the tents to view the equipment, which was very interesting, and were given a quick talk. We took loads of photos, had a bite to eat, and then it was time to descend. No one wanted to leave. It was a very wild, inhospitable place, but also very beautiful, and after taking ten days to get there, just staying for about fifty minutes didn't seem long enough.

I would have loved to walk further up the glacier to get a closer view of the Khumbu Icefall, but unfortunately it wasn't allowed to go any higher than the actual camp without a permit from the Nepalese government. These are hard to come by, as they are only given to people on official expeditions to the top of Everest — and that costs a minimum of £10,000!

Our trek back to Lukla, where we would board a small plane to fly back to Katmandu, took just two and a half days — so much easier to walk down than up; in fact, after being at high altitude with only 50% oxygen for three days, if it hadn't been for the rough ground I could have run down! I now fully understand why top athletes train at high altitude.

## *It was just one of those things . . .*

by Tony Bartlett

1. Do you remember when you joined the club?  
It became your universe, the centre, the hub.  
(To your training schedule your persistence clings.)  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
2. Do you remember your very first race,  
And how at the finish you fell flat on your face?  
In your subconscious the laughter still rings.  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
3. Do you remember your club's annual event,  
When as a marshal your support you lent,  
And of all the complexities this job brings?  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
4. Do you remember when you ran in the park,  
And fell over that tree-stump when the evening got dark?  
The bumps and the bruises, those nettles and stings?  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
5. Do you remember when you missed the team bus,  
And all you could do was to stand and cuss?  
The AVR party with dancing and wild flings?  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
6. Do you remember when you received the call  
That you'd left your shoes on the mat in the hall?  
Your ups and downs, the roundabouts and swings —  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
7. Do you remember when your spouse made you late  
For that local occasion, the fun run and fête?  
These recollections to which your mind springs . . .  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
8. Do you remember when you became a superset,  
And your running was harder but not over yet?  
The memory lingers on and your heart still sings.  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
9. Do you remember those injuries and sprains?  
Those clear, sunlit days and grey, heavy rains?  
But you flew through them all on feet that had wings!  
Remember: it was just one of those things.
10. Do you remember dear friends passed away,  
And think of them often both night and day?  
In your deep thoughts they rest higher than kings.  
Remember, remember: *it was just one of those things.*

## Secretary's Report

The fifteen members [see below] who have joined the club since the January issue of *Valley News* will now be insured against serious injury and will be able to take part in various club events, namely the Tom Roberts Handicap, a Paarlauf, the Over the Hills race, the Boxing Day Race and trips to France and Amsterdam.

Men's captain Darren Wrintmore and I are organizing a mile race at the Woolley Festival. This will be to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first four-minute mile by medical student Roger Bannister at Iffley Road track, Oxford, on 29 May 1954, with races taking place all around the country.

The Club Presentation in February was held at a new venue and (apart from the bar prices) was considered a huge success. Additional awards which had to be kept secret until the night were as follows: Nan Simpson Trophy for outstanding over-60 woman – Joyce Field; The Bomb – Tina Vivian and Sue MacGregor (for organizing the Over the Hills race); most improved male – Dennis Mellor; most improved female – Sue MacGregor; Frank Allen Trophy for outstanding over-60 man – Tony Bartlett; most interesting injury – Bob Ellis.

Finally we welcome Dick Barrow to the club as a vice-president [see *Club Officers, Page 4*]. Dick runs the Lock Inn café with his wife Jane and gives valuable financial help to our Over the Hills race. — *Stan Farr*

## *Welcome to the Valley!*

A record fifteen new members signed on during the first three months of 2004 (including Cathie Greenland, who rejoined after a year off): Robin Smith on 6 January, Carla Dudmen on 8 January, Lisa Lewis on 14 January, Isabel Williams on 5 February, Tom Frost on 10 February, James Anderson and Michael Pace both on 24 February, Annie and Tim Burkitt (second-claim) on 4 March, Paul Mumford on 8 March, Ken Brown on 9 March, Mark Kirkpatrick on 18 March, Louise Grubb on 23 March, and Julia Shaw on 25 March. We wish you all happy days and good times in "Happy Valley"!

## MILESTONES

Birthday greetings and good luck to the following members, who move up into their next age-groups this quarter: Linda Fice, 50 on 9 April; Dave Gosling, 60 on 13 April; Phil Mitchell, 50 on 17 April; new member James Anderson, 55 on 17 May; and Bob Ellis, 45 on 25 June.

## RESULTS: January-March

**Thu. 1 January - KEWSTOKE HANGOVER 10K:** 14 D Barber 38:03, 1 D Spicer 38:36, 32 R Bown (1st woman) 41:30, 38 D Kay (1st M60) 43:21, 41 Sue MacGregor (3rd woman) 43:54, 52 Stuart MacGregor 45:40, 58 R Barber (1st W50) 46:49, 65 S Phillips 48:55.

**Sat. 3 January - WILTSHIRE CROSS-COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS, Salisbury:** Senior men 10.3K - 46 T Northwood 52:40; U-13 girls - 2 K Sanford 9:16.

**Sun. 4 January - BIG BUNG BANG HALF-MARATHON MT:** 12 M Connor 1:36:49, 52 V Morey 1:53:39, 55 T Vivian (3rd W45) 1:55:51, 70 S Phillips 2:05:02, 76 D Ellis 2:07:55, 85 V Toms 2:19:24, 86 J Field (1st W60) 2:19:24. **GLOUCESTER 10M:** 15 D Barber 1:03:17, 54 D Kay 1:11:45, 57 L Ringham 1:11:53, 58 Sue MacGregor 1:12:02, 92 S Stephens 1:18:41.

**Sun. 11 January - WESSEX CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE, Upavon:** 42 R Ellis 37:28, 83 T Northwood 44:57. **STUBBINGTON GREEN 10K:** 46 A Bartlett 37:20, 303 L Irwin 4:31, 879 T Bartlett 1:11:24.

**Sun. 25 January - SLAUGHTERFORD 9M MT:** 6 D Spicer 59:04, 37 M Connor 1:06:26, 48 R Ellis 1:08:26, 64 I White 1:10:09, 169 V Morey 1:20:30, 202 A Meadow 1:24:58, 206 S Phillips 1:26:23, 256 B White 1:32:36, 257 M Pratt 1:32:36, 284 T Griffith 1:37:28, 333 T Bartlett 1:56:11. **ROMSEY 5M:** 128 R Barber (1st W50) 36:20.

**Sun. 1 February - BLACKMORE VALE HALF-MARATHON:** 16 M Connor 1:24:27, 106 D Kay (1st M60) 1:40:15, V Toms 1:56:47.

**Sun. 8 February - DURSLEY DOZEN MT:** 13 D Spicer 1:24:33, 56 D Barber 1:32:50, 73 M Connor 1:34:43, 116 I White 1:41:09, 255 L Harding 1:54:52. **WESSEX CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE, Ferndown:** 38 R Ellis 39:53, 82 T Northwood 48:16.

**Sun. 15 February - WESTON TOUGH 10 MT:** 79 R Ellis 1:09:53, 254 D Jarvis 1:17:57, 277 V Morey 1:18:50, 388 T Vivian 1:22:24, 436 T Simpson 1:24:21, 536 D Ellis 1:28:21, 587 C Dudman 1:30:20, 696 V Toms 1:35:09, 747 J Field 1:37:37. **LYTCHETT 10M:** 99 G Thwaites 1:19:13, 123 M Brain 1:23:26.

**Sun. 22 February - SALISBURY 10K:** 10 A Bartlett 37:04, 61 P Hunt 45:07, 80 G Thwaites 45:18, 85 R Barber 45:41, 124 S Phillips 48:22, 153 J Betteridge 50:02, 154 M Pratt 50:50, 202 T Griffith 55:50, 222 I S Farr (& Helga) 58:38, 223 J Farr 58:38.

**Sat. 28 February - HOLCOMBE 7M FELL RACE (1,950ft):** I White 1:04:00, 43 B White 1:22:57.

**Sun. 29 February - MALTA MARATHON:** D Kay 3:31:07. **BRAMLEY 20M:** 212 R Bown 2:23:40, 305 L Ringham 2:33:30, 358 Sue MacGregor 2:37:34, 366 T Vivian 2:38:05, 399 S Ringham 2:41:20, 548 S Stephens 2:55:07, 549 J Anderson 2:55:10, 635 S Phillips 3:03:49, 728 D Mellor 3:20:55; **BRAMLEY 10M:** 16 A Bartlett 59:43, 62 S Noyes 1:07:51, 67 Stuart MacGregor 1:08:17, 92 Les Unsworth 1:11:28, 103 V Morey 1:12:27, 106 L Jones 1:13:28, 121 D Jarvis 1:14:57, 122 L Irwin 1:14:59, 141 P Hunt 1:16:40, 142 N Yates 1:16:43, 158 T Rockliffe 1:18:33, 181 R Sales 1:20:15, 199 K Hall 1:22:14, 200 G Fice 1:22:14, 212 J Scott 1:23:44, 220 J Field (1st W60) 1:24:33, 249 G Phillips 1:27:13, 307 T Griffith 1:34:01, 321 H Harrison 1:36:35. **PEWSEY TERMINATOR 10M MT:** 18 D Spicer 1:16:56, 45 D Barber 1:21:02, 65 M Connor 1:24:57, 66 R Ellis 1:24:58, 273 M Pace 1:42:44, 433 A Meadow 1:53:34, 563 D Ellis 2:05:06, 670 T Bartlett 2:35:33.

**Sat. 6 March - WREAKE STOMP 6½M CC:** 35 I White 58:35, 69 B White 1:13:27.

**Sun. 7 March - READING HALF-MARATHON:** C Dudman 1:45:37. **LONDON SILVERSTONE HALF-MARATHON:** 1528 A Hickson (2nd M65) 1:46:00. **WESSEX CROSS-COUNTRY LEAGUE, Dorchester:** Snr men 7.8K - 33 R Ellis 27:12, 72 T Northwood 34:39.

**Sun. 14 March - BATH HALF-MARATHON:** 97 K Sparey 1:20:43, 102 A Bartlett 1:21:25, 120 D Barber 1:22:18, 289 Stuart MacGregor 1:28:49, 298 D Wrintmore 1:29:08, 407 H Pomroy-Smith 1:32:16, 535 S Noyes 1:35:15, 539 L Jones 1:35:17, 634 D Kay 1:37:07, 678 Sue MacGregor 1:37:57, 786 C Atkinson 1:39:55, 802 K Brown 1:40:17, 885 M Edwards 1:41:40, 933 G Thwaites 1:42:29, 1032 L Irwin 1:43:57, 1085 T Simpson 1:44:38, 1113 J Rockliffe 1:44:56, 1230 N Evans 1:46:21, 1353 S Stephens 1:47:57, 1354 J Anderson 1:47:57, 1409 T Rockliffe 1:48:38, 1411 R Sales 1:48:40, 1690 S Phillips 1:52:12, 1755 M Clarke 1:53:09, 1937 G Phillips 1:55:35, 2143 K Hall 1:57:59, 2981 D Mellor 2:11:38, 3729 T Bartlett 2:52:34. **FLEET HALF-MARATHON:** Les Unsworth 1:36:51, P Hunt 1:39:24, D Ellis 1:47:39, M Pratt 1:51:34.

**Sun. 21 March - CALNE 10K:** 4 K Sparey 35:55, R Ellis 39:40, D Jarvis 43:15, 34 R Barber (2nd woman) 45:12, M Hayward 45:55, J Betteridge 48:35, 74 J Field 52:27, M Clarke 50:25, 78 V Toms 53:22, 96 J Farr 59:36, 97 I S Farr (Helga 1st dog) 59:49, J Hunt 1:00:19, G Sharam 1:00:25. **EASTLEIGH 10K:** 531 M Brain 52:32.

**Sun. 28 March - PRAGUE HALF-MARATHON:** 209 D Wrintmore 1:27:02. **MARSHFIELD MUDLARK MT:** 6 D Barber 36:18, 18 K Brown 42:21, 25 P Mitchell 45:36.

**CORRECTION:** In the Valley News January 2004 Results page, Kevin Sparey's position in the Cheddar half-marathon on 8 November was omitted, and also his good time was exaggerated by six minutes: Kevin was fifth in 1:16:10. Apologies. — Editor.

For inclusion in Valley News, Wiltshire Times and The Book, send results to Stan Farr, 01225 755605, or avonvalleyrunners@yahoo.co.uk.

## FIXTURES: April-July

### APRIL

- Sun 18 London Marathon.  
 Sun 25 Shakespeare Marathon, 1.00; Corsham 10K, 11.00; Frenchay 10K, 11.00;  
 Marwell Zoo 10K, 10.30; Highworth 5M, 11.00; Pensford 10K, 1.00.

### MAY

- Sun 2 Neolithic Marathon Avebury-Stonehenge, 10.30; Imber Half-Marathon, 11.00;  
 Fordingbridge 10K, 11.00; Glastonbury 5-7M, 11.00.  
 Mon 3 Springfield Triathlon; Bradford 3M, 2.30.  
 Sat 8 Lyneham 10K, 11.00.  
 Sun 9 Alton 10M, 10.30; Keynsham 10K, 11.00; Cowpat 6M, 11.00.  
 Wed 12 Yeovil 5K, 7.15.  
 Sat 15 Bratton 11K, 11.00.  
 Thu 27 Tom Roberts 5K Handicap, 7.40.  
 Sat 29 Bath (Hilly) 10M, 11.00.

### JUNE

- Sat 5 Dartmoor 32M, 9.30.  
 Wed 9 Yeovil 5K, 7.15.  
 Sat 12 Broad Town 5M, 2.30.  
 Sun 13 Salisbury 10, 11.00.  
 Sun 27 Quantock Beast 5-7M, 11.00.

### JULY

- Sun 4 Portland 10M, 11.00.  
 Wed 7 Chippenham River Run 5K, 7.30.  
 Sat 10 Woolley Mile, 3.00; Charmouth-Golden Cap 8M MT, 3.00.  
 Sun 11 Batheaston Three Downs 10M MT, 11.00; New Forest 10M, 12.45.  
 Wed 14 Yeovil 5K, 7.15.

## CLUB OFFICERS, 2004

At the annual general meeting of Avon Valley Runners on Thursday 15 January the following were elected as officers for the year just commencing: President – Mike Holland; vice-presidents – Clive Crocker, Dick Barrow; chairman – Bob Ellis; vice-chairman – Ted Rockcliffe; honorary secretary – Stan Farr; assistant honorary secretary – Judy Farr; treasurer – Les Unsworth; honorary auditor – Linda Unsworth; men's captain – Darren Wrintmore, vice-captain – Les Unsworth; women's captain – Susie Phillips, vice-captain – Joyce Field; press officer – Darren Wrintmore; newsletter editor – Tim Northwood; additional committee member – Peter Chapple.

## The Frank Allen Cup

### *A Personal Message*

On Saturday 7 February at the Avon Valley Runners Social and Prizegiving, I became the recipient of this award. This came as a total surprise to me, as well as something of a shock. I regard this award, not for any achievement that I might or might not have made, but as a sign of care. Care that has been shown to me. Care is not always forthcoming in this day and age, but you care, you Avon Valley Runners — *you care*. Your genuine encouragement and concerned support have been a constant source of comfort, especially during the last few years. It is a privilege and a real pleasure to be associated with you all. We are a great club, and you its members are great people!

God bless and thank you. — *Tony Bartlett.*

*This is your newsletter! Items for inclusion to: Tim Northwood, 45 Hilperton Rd, Trowbridge; Tel. (01225) 769929; [tijono@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:tijono@tiscali.co.uk)*