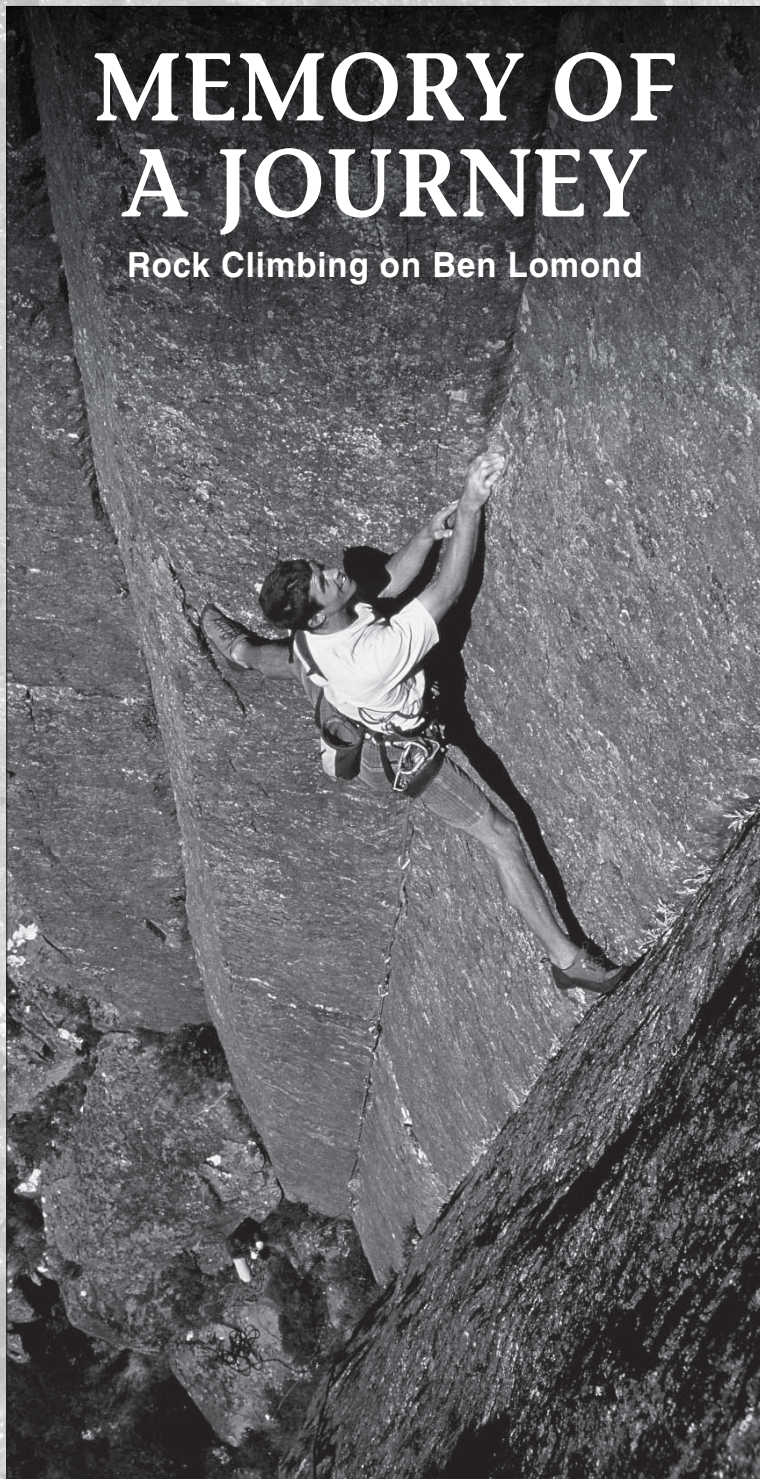


# MEMORY OF A JOURNEY

Rock Climbing on Ben Lomond



by Robert McMahon & Gerry Narkowicz

CLIMB TASMANIA INCORPORATED

To all those who enjoyed  
the freedom of the mountain  
and took part in the great adventure.

*“Think where man’s glory most begins and ends,  
And say my glory was I had such friends.”*

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS



## **BEN LOMOND**

First published in 2008 by Climb Tasmania Incorporated, in association with Oriel, 150 Frankford Road Exeter, Tasmania 7275. Copies of this book are available from the above address or by phoning (03) 63944225. Email : gerry.narkowicz@bigpond.com

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Photography by Robert McMahon unless otherwise indicated.  
Front Cover: Denison Crag at dawn.  
Frontispiece: Brent Oldinger on *C.E.W Bean* (23) at Ragged Jack.  
Back Cover Inset: Gerry Narkowicz on the marathon second pitch of *Howitzer* (22) at Pavement Bluff.

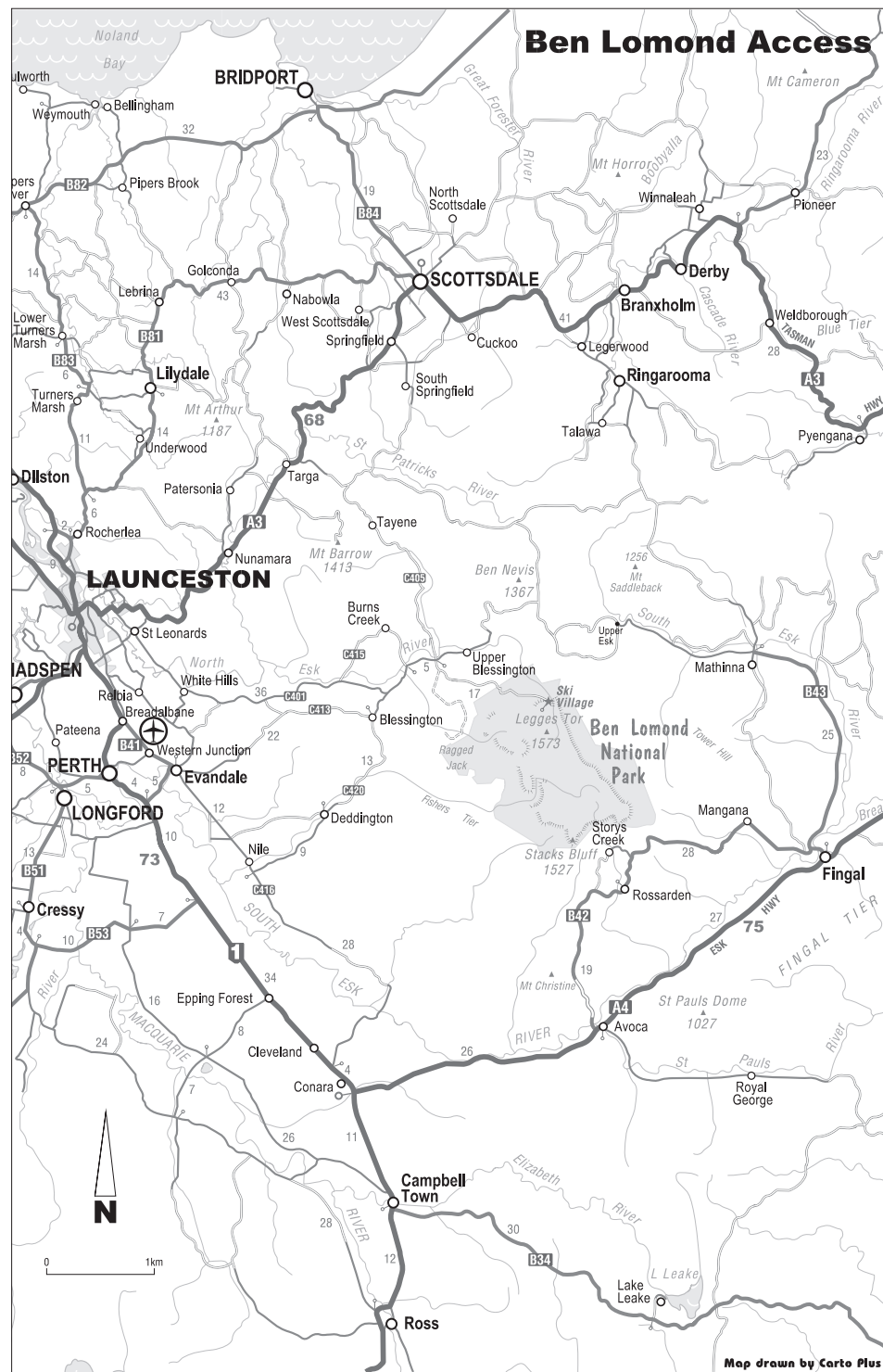
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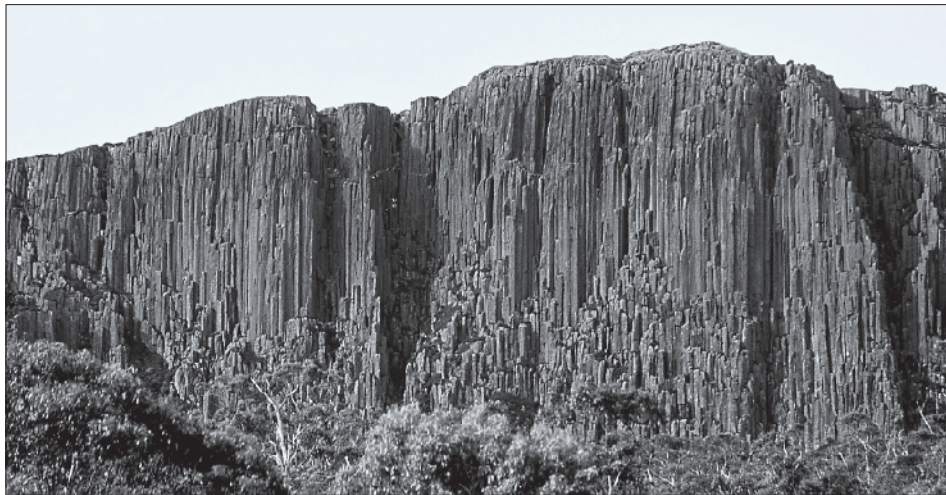
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Frews Flutes on the Northern Escarpment.

## ■ INTRODUCTION

Ben Lomond is a world class climbing area, unique in Australia for its dolerite columns which form splitter cracks of astonishing purity. It is, without doubt, Australia's premier crack climbing venue. This is climbing's version of marathon running. It's common to plug twenty cams in a pitch and still run out of gear. Grade 26 sport climbers have gone to pieces and literally been hauled up the easiest route on the Flutes. Be prepared to spill blood. The Ben Lomond experience is like going ten rounds with a punching bag full of dolerite boulders which you have to pound into dust. And yet the rewards are glorious. After a winter of clipping bolts, the soul yearns for a big, dramatic cliff and a spearing crack; to sit exhausted on a belay ledge and take in the views, listen to the currawongs or watch a wedge tail eagle soaring; to sit by an alpine tarn with friends and marvel at amazing sunsets after another day of new routing. And it's all so accessible, just 50km from Launceston in Northern Tasmania.

The Ben Lomond massif is a cliff bound alpine plateau about 15km long and up to 5km wide with the largest continuous tract of land above 1500m in Tasmania. There are 350 routes on the mountain spread out over five major areas. The main climbing area is on the northern escarpment and features the towering dolerite columns of Frews Flutes. Up to 200m high, the columns form perfect parallel jam cracks of all widths providing unrelenting strenuous pitches, thankfully broken by the occasional ledge, though some climbs do have hanging belays. There are several other worthwhile cliffs near the Flutes with an entirely different rock structure, providing superb face climbing and giving some respite from the marathon jam cracks. The 100m high Pavilion is the best of them and is characterised by steep face climbing through bulges and roofs with intermittent cracks for spaced, but adequate protection. Local Loser is a one pitch gem giving a superb day out on steep faces and blank bridging grooves, with the occasional roof thrown in. Heathcliff is another crag west of the Flutes with a collection of many superb face climbs. Ragged Jack is a separate mountain to the west of the northern escarpment and is a one pitch version of Frews Flutes. Pavement Bluff is another precise, columnar cliff about three hours walk from the ski village with two/three pitch routes equally as good as the Flutes. Africa is a 200m bastion of steep, foreboding and often featureless rock on the western escarpment, with the occasional crack line penetrating its defences, about two hours walk from Story's Creek. Finally there is Stacks Bluff and the magnificent Denison Crag about one hour's walk from Story's Creek on the southern end of the massif.



Denison Crag on the southern escarpment.

## ■ USE OF THIS GUIDE

The cliffs are described from left to right starting at the Northern Escarpment and going in an anti-clockwise direction around the mountain in the following order: the Northern Escarpment, Ragged Jack, Africa, Stacks Bluff and Pavement Bluff. Pavement Bluff is the only cliff described from right to left because that is the direction one approaches the cliff. The guide has two indexes, an alphabetical and grade index. Note that climbs are referenced by route number and not page number.

**Photograph topos:** As many of the cliffs as possible are covered by photograph topos with the route number in the text matching the route number in the photo and the index. Climbs with or without a photograph topos are easily distinguished by looking at the route number in the text.

**i** = photograph

**23** = no photograph

## ■ TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION

Ben Lomond is about 50km south-east of Launceston, a city of around 80,000 people in Northern Tasmania. For a climbing trip to Northern Tasmania, Launceston is the most central place to base yourself. As well as the crags in this guidebook, there are 850 climbs in central Launceston in the South Esk river, 300 climbs in the North Esk river just 15 minutes from town, and 145 sport routes at Hillwood about 30 minutes down the Tamar River. There are regular flights to Launceston from Melbourne and a shuttle bus from the airport to the city for about \$8. The Redline coach from Hobart is about \$23 for a one way full fare. Hobart is about 2 hours drive south of Launceston. The Spirit Of Tasmania ferries dock at Devonport and travel daily from Melbourne. In summer peak season, fares start at \$280 return which also includes your vehicle. For accommodation, Launceston Backpackers is recommended (6334 2327) or you can pitch a tent at Glen Dhu caravan Park (6344 2600). It is also possible to camp at Egg Island Point about 3km upstream from Hillwood, about 30 minutes drive north of the city.

You will require your own vehicle to get to Ben Lomond. The Northern Escarpment is about 45 minutes drive from Launceston while the southern escarpment at Stacks Bluff takes about 90 minutes drive. A four wheel drive comes in very handy for trips to Ragged Jack or Stacks Bluff, taking a considerable amount of time off the approach walk.



## Introduction

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There is a campsite with toilet facilities about half way up the mountain on the left hand side of the road. Alternatively, the climbers hut on the Northern Escarpment was built by Robert McMahon and friends for climbers use. It is a comfortable stone hut with bunks for up to a dozen people, a bench for food preparation, large fireplace and even a lounge chair. It is situated 100m prior to the Carr Villa Scout Hut on the left hand side of the road about 40m into the bush. A small carpark exists here as well as an intermittent stream. Firewood is scarce in the area, so either collect some further down the mountain, bring your own, or preferably use a fuel stove for cooking. The creek is unreliable in the summer months near the climbers hut, but there is usually water in the creek next to the Scout Hut further up the road. It would be wise to bring your own water if staying for a few days. There is a toilet installed near the car park at Carr Villa.

Trips to Ragged Jack and Stacks Bluff can be made in a long day trip, but generally the rest of the cliffs apart from the Northern Escarpment are best suited for two or three day trips and camping out. The campsites for each area are described in the introduction to those respective cliffs.

### ■ DIRECTIONS

For the Northern Escarpment, take the A3 road out of Launceston then onto the C401 which goes through the suburb of St Leonards and continues for approximately 40km to the Ben Lomond turn-off. A further 17km of gravel road takes you up the mountain. Lookout for the turn-off on the right to Carr Villa. After about 1km is a car park and the Carr Villa scout hut, and the start of the walk to the cliffs. Ragged Jack is also approached via the C401, but turns off the road up the mountain after about 1km onto a forestry road. Africa and Stacks Bluff are approached from the south via Storys Creek. Pavement Bluff can be approached from both the north and the south. It is either a flat three hour walk from the ski village, or a steep two hour walk via the old Mangana track from the south. See respective guides for details.

### ■ ACCESS

All the climbing areas are within the boundary of Ben Lomond National Park. Park fees

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Left: Gerry Narkowicz leading the classic *Lapis Lazuli* (17) at Local Loser.

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therefore apply, though vehicles are rarely checked by rangers except in the winter months for the ski season. When in Tasmania for a climbing holiday, it is best to purchase a 3 month pass allowing multiple access to national parks, available from any national park or at Service Tasmania offices.

### ■ WARNING

Rockclimbing is hazardous and its participants do so at their own risk. Despite strenuous efforts to be accurate with all information in this book, the authors and publisher accept no responsibility for inaccurate or incomplete information, nor any controversial grading of climbs. Some of the routes have not had second ascents to verify the grade. At best, grades are only a rough, objective indication of difficulty taking into account the level of technique required, strenuousness, the quality of the rock and availability of protection. The authors and publisher also accept no responsibility for the state of the climbs listed in the guide with regards to loose rock and vegetation. Loose rock remains a distinct possibility on some routes. Climbers should wear helmets, not only for protection against loose rock but in the case of leader falls. Most of the climbs are located on steep hillsides and unstable scree slopes. Please take extra care when scrambling on these hillsides. In the case of an accident, rescue may be a long time coming and difficult to effect because of the steep terrain. Another danger, especially if walking to remote cliffs, is the possibility of low cloud descending making visibility and navigating on the plateau very difficult. It is assumed that users of this guide have a high level of ability, will properly use appropriate equipment and take all due care for personal safety.

### ■ WEATHER

Ben Lomond is an alpine area and subject to bad weather at any time of year, so come prepared. The climbing season is generally in the summer months between November and March, but even then, it has been known to snow on occasions in summer. A high pressure system over the state usually means good climbing conditions on the Ben. The mountain tends to have a mind of its own with regards to weather. It can be clear and sunny

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Right: Steve 'Moss' Moon leading *Blood And Iron* (22) at Ragged Jack. Photo: Bruce Cameron.





in Launceston, and clagged in and damp on the mountain. Sometimes it's worthwhile to drive to a high vantage spot in Launceston (the lookout on High St) and see if the mountain is clear. If the cloud is down on the mountain, but it is a clear blue sky everywhere else, the mist will usually lift by 11am. Avoid windy days unless you want to be blown off the cliff. We have walked to the top of the Flutes on a clear day for an abseil descent, only to be turned back by gale force winds on the cliff. If the forecast is for westerly weather with cold fronts, forget it. Likewise easterly weather with precipitation spells doom for any climbing trip.

■ **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Adhering to the code of conduct and plain common sense is vital to maintaining access to climbing venues. Personal responsibility, self regulation and strong conservation values are the key points underlying the code of conduct. Fires and dogs are not permitted on the mountain. It is part and parcel of climbing that climbers conduct their sport entirely at their own risk, therefore land managers are not legally liable for any accidents as a result of climbing or gaining access to climbing areas. All rubbish must be taken home including cigarette butts, jamming tape, orange peel etc. If you have to do number twos and a toilet is unavailable, then please bury your waste well clear of waterways and tracks.

■ **EQUIPMENT**

All the climbs on Ben Lomond are traditionally protected with natural gear. The marathon cracks of Frews Flutes, Pavement Bluff and Ragged Jack require double sets of cams from #1 friend to #3.5 friend size, and sometimes triple sets depending on the size of the crack. Small cams and aliens less than #1 friend size are very helpful and a couple of large cams of #4 friend size or bigger are also handy. A set of wires of all sizes is a must and hexes are also very useful.

Most routes on the mountain are multi-pitch and some kind of cordelette for setting up equalized belays is essential. Many climbs will take several hours to complete, and so a daypack with water and snacks is worth taking up the route. A single 11mm rope should be sufficient for the straight crack routes, but double 9mm should be

Left: Gerry Narkowicz and Hans Mohler on *Barbe Di Vendetta* (17).

considered for face routes on the Pavilion or big routes at Africa and Stacks Bluff. It goes without saying that helmets should be worn, as loose rock is a possibility on many routes. Come prepared for cold, wet weather at any time of the year and yet on the other hand, sunburn cream and a hat is a lifesaver when spending several hours on a route on a hot summer's day.

■ **NO BOLTS**

There are no bolted routes on the mountain, and the people who established the existing routes believe it should remain that way. It is a wilderness area and there must be some monuments to pure climbing left on the planet, an absolute standard so to speak, against which we compare our climbing achievements. There were some abseil stations on Frews Flutes and the Pavilion for a while, but they were removed in April 2007. There is now no ambiguity and the mountain is bolt free. Any routes or abseil stations established with bolts will be chopped; simple as that. Besides, there are plenty of well protected new routes to do without resorting to bolts.

■ **ESTABLISHING NEW ROUTES**

Cleaning new routes of loose rock is potentially dangerous to people below the cliff. Take every precaution to ensure the safety of yourself and others when making a route safe for climbing. This guidebook is definitive to the best of our knowledge. If it's not in the guide then you've found yourself a new route. Please let the authors know the details for future updates.

■ **ABBREVIATIONS**

- FA First ascent
- FFA First free ascent
- SLCD Spring loaded camming device
- L Left
- LH Lefthand
- R Right
- RH Righthand

■ **STAR RATING**

No stars: An average climb, but still worth doing otherwise the first ascent team wouldn't have bothered.

- \* A good climb worth doing
- \*\* A very good climb, highly recommended
- \*\*\* An outstanding climb; a classic not to be missed.

■ **INTERNATIONAL GRADE COMPARISON**

Australia	USA	France	UK Tech.	UK
1	Class 1	1		Easy - Moderate
2	Class 2			
3	Class 3			
4	Class 4			MD
5				D
6	5.1			HD
7	5.2	MVD		
8	5.3	2	VD	
9	5.4	3	HVD	
10	5.5		MS	
11	5.6	4	S	
12			4a	HS
13	5.7	4+	VS	
14		4b		
15	5.8	5	4c	
16				5a
17	5.9	6a	5b	HVS
18				
19	5.10a	6a+	6a	E1
20	5.10b	6b		
21	5.10c	6b+		
22	5.10d	6c	7a	E2
23	5.11a	6c		
24	5.11b	6c+	6b	E3
25	5.11c	7a		
26	5.11d	7a+	7b	E4
27	5.12a	7b		
28	5.12b	7b+	6c	E5
29	5.12c	7c		
30	5.12d	7c+	7a	E6
31	5.13a	8a		
32	5.13b	8a+	7b	E7
33	5.13c	8b		
34	5.13d	8b+	7c	E8
	5.14a	8c		
	5.14b	8c+		E9
	5.14c			
	5.14c			

Reproduced with permission from 'Arapiles Selected Best' by Glen Tempest

# THE MEN OF THE BEN

## ROBERT MCMAHON

The name of Robert McMahon is synonymous with Ben Lomond. The history of Ben Lomond climbing is essentially the memory of his journey since 1972. Out of 350 routes on the mountain, he was on the first ascent team of 221 of them. Most of the discoveries and cliff names were his, and it was his passion for the Ben that drew many of the other first ascensionists along with him.

## GERRY NARKOWICZ

Gerry was particularly active in the early 80's and from 1997 onwards. He was on the first ascent of 75 routes, including some of the hardest cracks on the mountain.



## MICK LING

Mick was a consistent new router on the Ben from the early 80's to the mid nineties, putting up 51 routes and was on the first ascent of such classics as *Ruwenzori* at Africa. He was famous for his culinary extravaganzas around the camp fire. Though half the size of everybody else, he ate twice as much.

## NEALE SMITH

Neale was a powerful crack climber who put up 49 routes from the late 70's and throughout the 1980's. His dry wit, often inflamed by home made blackberry wine kept many amused around the campfire.



## BEN MADDISON

According to Bob McMahon, Ben was the best crack climber he has ever seen, and the boldest. He had a big impact on Ben Lomond in the late 1970's with 28 routes. If you see the name Ben Maddison on the first ascent in this guide, be wary of the protection, because often you'll find there was none. He sometimes climbed in a green and red jester's suit with bells.

## BRUCE CAMERON

Bruce was a frequent visitor from NSW in the early 80's who added 16 new routes to the mountain, mainly at Ragged Jack and Pavement Bluff. The majority of the weight in Bruce's pack on these expeditions was the vast quantity of grog he used to take along.



## JOHN SMART

John was a climber from Canberra who put up 15 significant routes in the late 70's and early 80's. He did the first route at Pavement Bluff with Bob and also was on the first ascent of the mighty *Kurtz* (20) at Africa. He came agonizingly close to claiming the first ascent of *Defender of the Faith* in a protracted siege. While it was Robin Thompson who taught the locals how to jam and did 10 significant routes on a visit in 1978 including *Rigaudon* (20), *Ramadan* (19) and *Rondeau* (19). His great route *Laendler* is the one he particularly wanted to be remembered for.

## JOHN FANTINI

John is well known as one of the hardmen of Australian climbing. John lived here for a while in the early 80's and has been a regular visitor since. Fuelled by a diet of lettuce leaves, John squeezed as much climbing time out of the day in pursuit of footage, and burnt out all his partners in the process. Most of his 14 routes on the Ben have been upgraded by two grades.



## ROBIN THOMPSON

It is fitting that Robins Buttress, with its classic cracks that epitomise Ben Lomond climbing, is named after Robin Thompson. He was the Englishman who taught the locals how to jam and did 10 significant routes on a visit in 1978 including *Rigaudon* (20), *Ramadan* (19) and *Rondeau* (19). His great route *Laendler* is the one he particularly wanted to be remembered for.

## IAN LEWIS

One of the most amazing statements in Australian climbing history was made by Ian Lewis, with his ascents of three mighty lines (the Trinity) on Denison Crag over three days in 1973. Between 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> December, Lewis climbed *No Blind* (19) and *Blue Eyed Son* (18), and on the third day was joined by Bryan Kennedy on *Aqualung* (19). Even with modern equipment, the consensus these days is that *Aqualung* is solid grade 21, which at the time made *Aqualung* a contender for the hardest multi-pitch climb in Australia. Lewis was on the first ascent of 9 routes on Ben Lomond.



## SIMON PARSONS

Simon was Tasmania's best climber in the 1980's and put up 11 routes, including some of the hardest on Ben Lomond at the time. He scored the great prize of *Defender of the Faith* (22) as well as *Climbers Variant* (24), plus other difficult routes in the company of Robert Staszewski and Phil Bigg. He also did other desperates at Stacks Bluff such as *Maxalon* (23) with Kim Carrigan.



## LYLE CLOSS

Lyle Closs did the first recorded ascent on Ben Lomond when he climbed *Brunhilde* (16) on Stacks Bluff with Reg Williams, and went on to add another 10 new routes. He also accompanied Ian Lewis on two climbs of the famous Trinity on Denison Crag in 1973.

## ROBERT STASZEWSKI

Robert Staszewski's ascent of *Masterblaster* (24) in 1981 was equal to the hardest route in Tasmania at the time, and was the hardest crack on Ben Lomond for many years. He was on the first ascent of 11 routes, and several of them such as the desperate pure finger crack of *Rajah Eliminate* (23) are undergraded and unrepeated.



## OTHERS

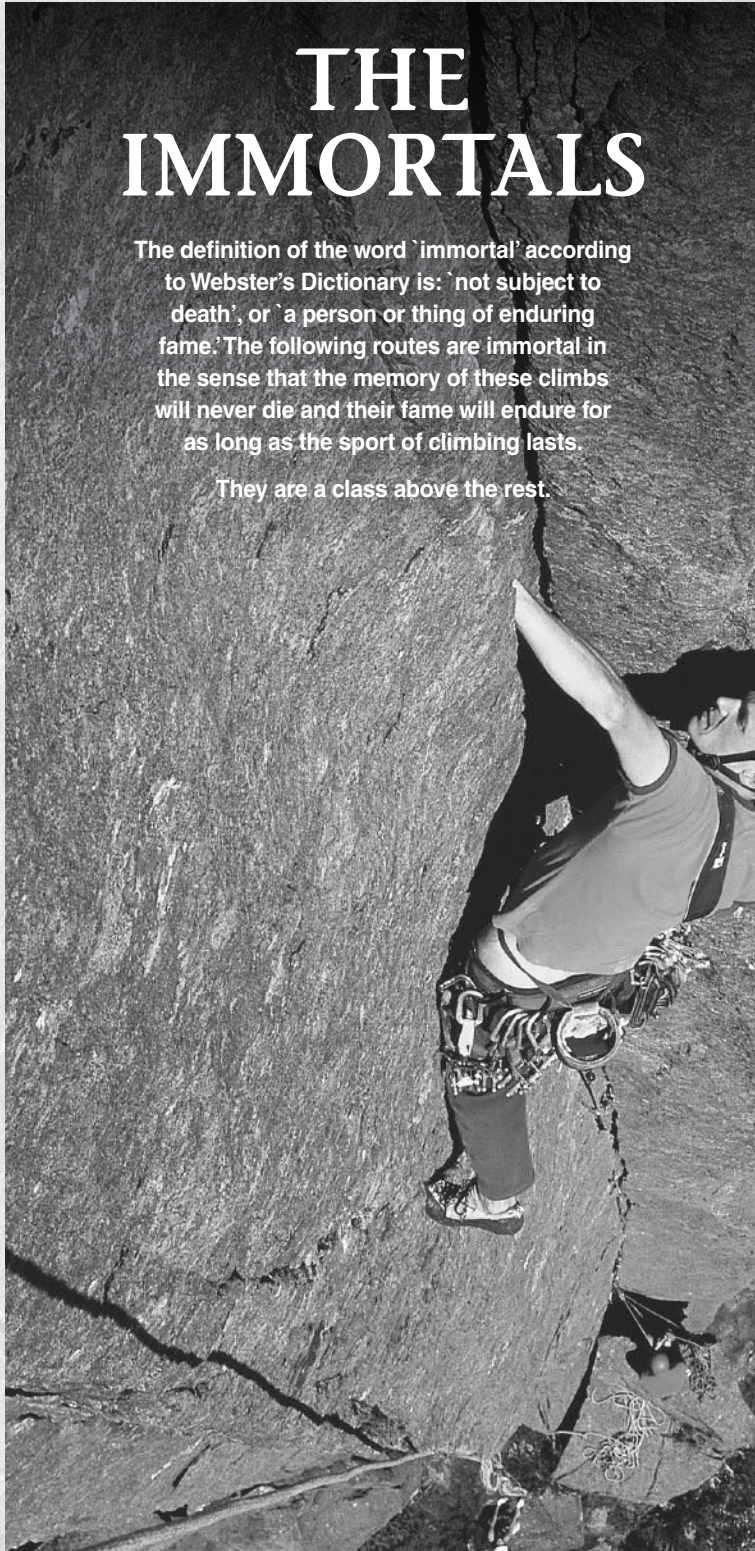
All together, 117 people have been on the first ascent team of routes on Ben Lomond. While the following people have not contributed as many new routes as those featured in this article, their larger than life personalities have coloured the Ben Lomond experience of climbing forever. Such people include Mick McHugh, Robert Frew, Richard Schmidt, Bryan Kennedy, Keith Lockwood, Ian Thomas, Peter Morris, Howard Smith, Greg Moore and Steve Moon.



# THE IMMORTALS

The definition of the word 'immortal' according to Webster's Dictionary is: 'not subject to death', or 'a person or thing of enduring fame.' The following routes are immortal in the sense that the memory of these climbs will never die and their fame will endure for as long as the sport of climbing lasts.

They are a class above the rest.



## IMMORTALS

CLIMB	GRADE	CLIFF	ROUTE NO.
Aqualung	21	Stacks Bluff	300
Aquila	21	Frews Flutes	123
Barbe Di Vendetta	17	Frews Flutes	124
Blood And Iron	22	Ragged Jack	221
Brother Jack Straw	20	Pavilion	69
Burma Shave	18	Heathcliff	174
C.E.W Bean	23	Ragged Jack	218
Dangerman	21	Frews Flutes	121
Defender Of The Faith	22	Frews Flutes	113
Die Nadal	22	Frews Flutes	111
Hidden Secrets	20	Local Loser	85
Howitzer	22	Pavement Bluff	320
King Of Heaven	24	Frews Flutes	131
Kurtz	20	Africa	252
Laendler	20	Frews Flutes	163
Lost Dreams And Found Dreams	17	Heathcliff	186
Master Blaster	24	Frews Flutes	122
Powerdive Eliminate	22	Frews Flutes	149
Rajah	18	Frews Flutes	117
Ramadan	19	Frews Flutes	115
Rigaudon	20	Frews Flutes	114
Road To Ballyshannon	22	Pavement Bluff	343
Rock A Day Johnny	18	Frews Flutes	164
Ruwenzori	20	Africa	240
Solaris	17	Pavilion	60
Tupelo Honey	18	Heathcliff	185
Warlord	20	Pavilion	57

Left: Matt Spring leading *Rigaudon* (20) on Frews Flutes.

# JACOBS LADDER TO SNAKE BUTTRESS



Ben Maddison leading the first ascent of *French Kisses In A Darkened Doorway* (19) on Snake Buttress in 1979.

## ■ INTRODUCTION

Jacobs Ladder is the series of hairpin bends on the road leading to the top of the plateau and the ski village. Down left in the gully to the east is Strickland Gorge. There is a lot of rock between Jacobs Ladder and the Pavilion, but much of it is a jumble of ridges with only a small number of decent, neat faces for climbing. Amidst the labyrinth of gullies and ridges, forty two routes have been done, some of them very worthwhile. The best quality climbing in this section is to be found on Whympers Crag, the columns of Tenant Buttress, and Snake Buttress.

## ■ GRADE INDEX

* GRADE 10	ROUTE NO.
Frews Route	33
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GRADE 12	
Queequeg	28
GRADE 13	
Kolokotronos	29
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Robert McMahon on the first ascent of *Seif 2* (15), a delightful pinnacle on the ridge above Strickland Gorge. The year is 1981.

## PINNACLE

Looking east from Jacobs Ladder is a prominent leaning pinnacle on the ridge. Access via the ridge leading down to the pinnacle. Drive to the top of Jacobs Ladder and then several hundred metres further towards the ski village. Choose a spot to cross Strickland Gorge where it is not so steep, then up to the top of the ridge. Make your way north along the ridge top to the pinnacle. Approach time is approximately one hour.

### 1 Seif 2 25m 15 \*

Climb the easy angled face starting on the right. Rap off top. FA: Robert McMahon and Ian Thomas. April 1981

## WHYMPER CRAG

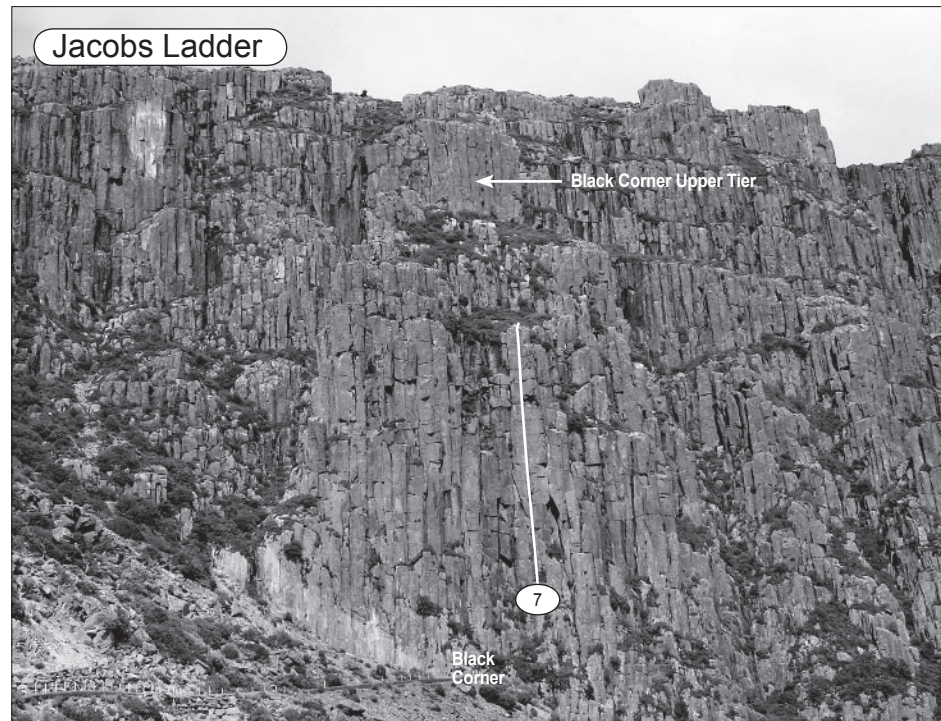
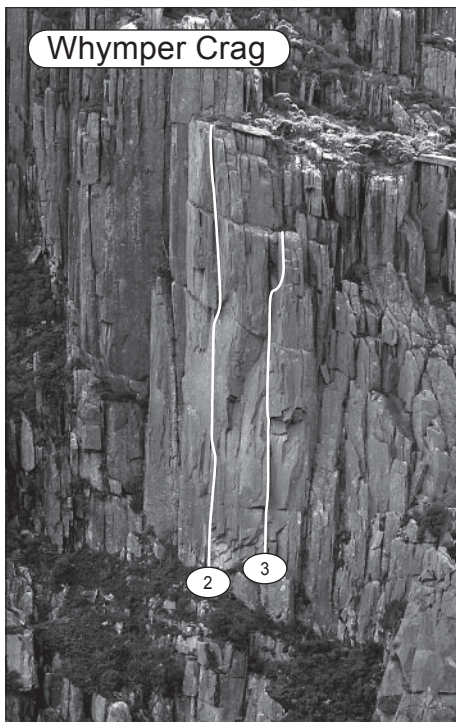
On the steep hillside east of Jacobs Ladder and on the other side of Strickland Gorge is a prominent buttress. Park at one of the corners on the Jacobs Ladder when opposite the crag and scramble down into the gorge and up to the cliff. A straight forward approach which looks further than it is.

### 2 Back In The Race 45m 19 \*\*

1) 25m, 19. The main line of the crag - up the middle and through the roof. Turn the first bulge using a superb flake on the R of the face. Wonderful jamming up the smooth face to a hanging belay under the roof. 2) 20m, 19. Traverse R under roof and handjam through it, with a flange on the roof allowing a back rest, turning a potentially desperate crux into a virtual chimney. Continue jamming steeply to summit. A magnificent route. FA: Robert McMahon, Neale Smith & Roxanne Wells 15/2/89

### 3 Wild Mountain Times 40m 20 \*

Initial groove on R end of crag. Rather awkward giving way to jamming through roofs. Ignore the final groove - it is dirty and wet. Move out R up overhanging face and arête for scary, steep, and balancy finish (crux). FA: Robert McMahon, Roxanne Wells 15/3/89



## JACOB'S LADDER AREA

### ORANGE ROADSIDE BUTTRESS

High up on the Jacobs Ladder road is a short orange buttress which is about as close to the road as you can get. Belay from the road. The three best central lines were done.

### 4 Norm's Crack 15m 20

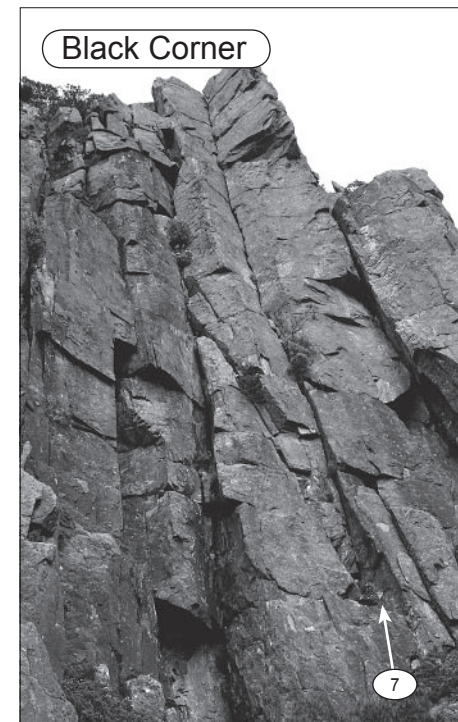
The LH line which begins as a finger crack. FA: Norm Selby. 1998

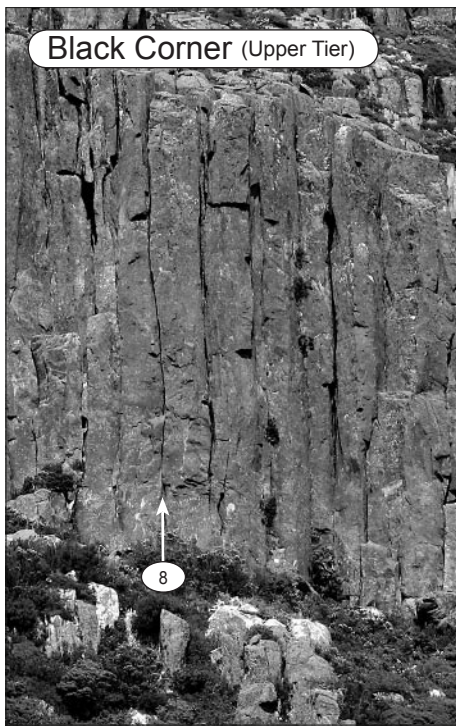
### 5 Megan's Climb 15m 17

About 2m to the R of above is a corner crack. FA: Richard Campagna. 1998

### 6 Hypo Crack 15m 18

The thin crack towards the RHS of the buttress. FA: Robert McMahon. 1998





Black Corner (Upper Tier)

**BLACK CORNER**

Further down Jacobs Ladder from the Orange Roadside Buttress is a hairpin bend with a sign labeled Black Corner, with a prominent buttress rising above it.

**7 Black Corner, No Standing 70m 19 \*\***

On the RHS of the buttress above Black Corner is a neat jam crack in a prominent corner. A mix of jamming and stemming providing great access to the isolated buttress above. FA: Mick Ling and Roxanne Wells. 1/1/93

**SUNSHINE BUTTRESS (BLACK CORNER UPPER TIER)**

Directly above the Black Corner Buttress is a small buttress with some beautiful looking cracks. Access by going to the top of Jacobs Ladder and walking along the top of the ridge and abseil to the climbs. From left to right:

**8 Cold Start to the Day 25m 21 \*\***

On the LHS of the buttress is the best line on the cliff, a clean, straight jam crack. The crux is a couple of finger locks. FA: Mick Ling, John Fry. 12/2/94

**9 It's Better in the Sun 25m 18**

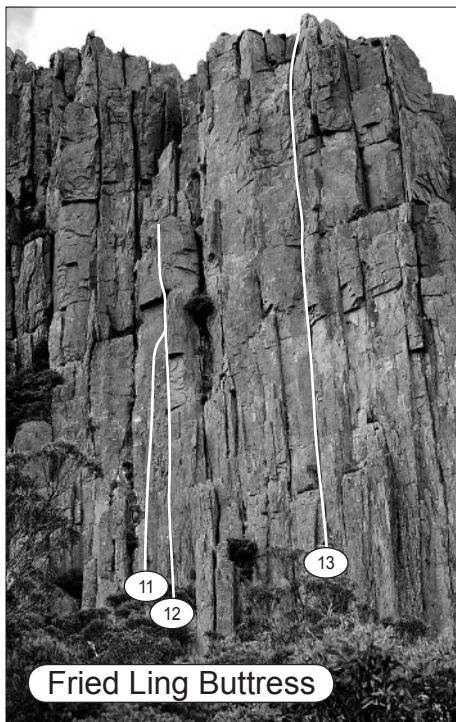
Straight forward jamming. FA: John Fry, Mick Ling. 12/2/94

**10 Warmed Up 25m 19**

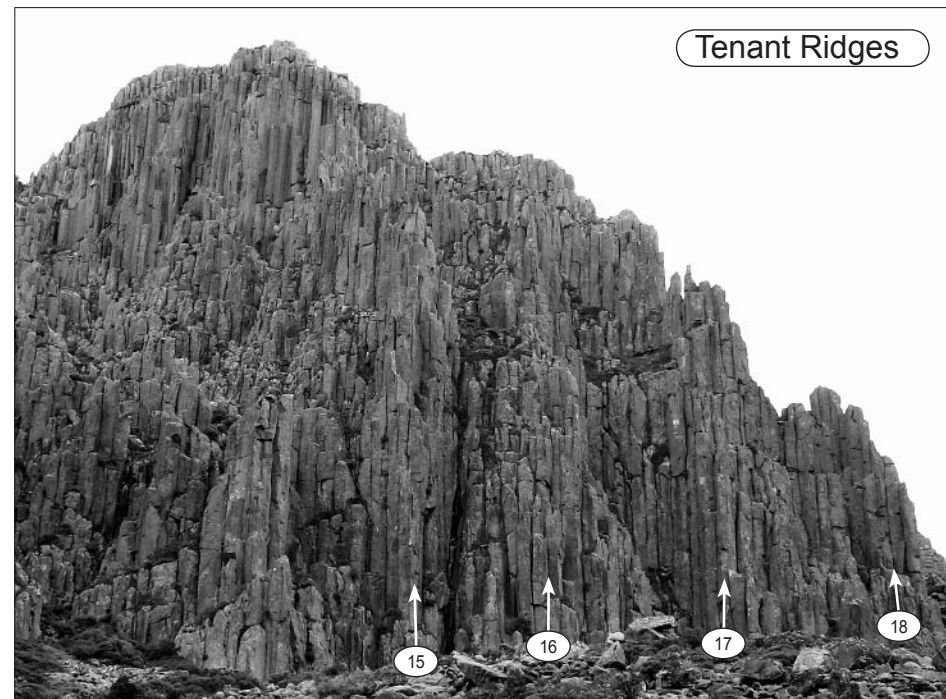
Not straight forward jamming. FA: Mick Ling, John Fry. 12/2/94

**10a Follow On 30m 19**

The L slanting clean crack on the RHS of the buttress. FA: Roxanne Wells, Mick Ling. 1/1/93



Fried Ling Buttress



Tenant Ridges

**FRIED LING BUTTRESS**

About 1 km past the Rangers Station on the main road is a prominent scree slope that comes down to the edge of the road, about 500m before the bottom of Jacobs Ladder. About 50m past this is a pullover spot to park the car. Directly above and slightly to the left (east) is a prominent buttress amidst the jumble of ridges and pinnacles in the area. Go up the scree and when at the cliffline, bush bash about 100m to the left to the base of the buttress. All routes are 2 pitches.

**11 Roasted 95m 17**

On the LHS of the buttress is a thin corner crack leading up to a chimney. FA: Mick Ling and John Fry. 10/9/94

**12 Stir Fry 95m 18**

About 2m to the R of above is another neat crack leading up to the same chimney. FA: Mick Ling and John Fry. 30/4/94

**13 Poached Ling 95m 20**

In the centre of the buttress is a prominent crack going all the way to the top, starting in a R facing corner. FA: Mick Ling and John Fry. 3/12/94

**14 Hot Cocky Shit 300m 14**

Somewhere between this buttress and Tenant Buttress is this mercifully forgotten line, recorded here for history's sake. The first pitch (45m) is quite presentable. The next 250m of mixed rock and overhanging scrub is desperately difficult, heralding a new era in mountaineering. FA: Brett Duhig and Robert McMahon 1977

**14a Sandles 60m 18**

A 2 pitch route to the L of Tenant Ridges. Access was from the top of Jacob's Ladder, walking across the plateau before dropping down and traversing into the line of 2 pitch buttresses L of Long Term Lease. It's another dolerite crack system - what do you expect? FA: Roxanne Wells, Mick Ling. January 1997.



19	Tenant Ridge	18	*
20	Five Star Frog	22	**
21	Mighty To Save	24	**
22	No Vacancy	18	*
23	Rockin In The Free World	21	***
24	Leapfrog	17	*

## TENANT RIDGES

Access via the scree slope that comes down to the edge of the main road about 1km past the Rangers Station as described above. Head slightly right up the scree slope to the base of 3 ridges that come down fairly close to each other, about 20m apart. A steep 20 minute walk to the cliff.

### 15 Long Term Lease 220m 20

Locate the LH ridge and select a starting corner which leads into the 2nd pitch with a roof (the crux). From then on it's about moving up the ridge and simply opting for the best line. 1)10m, 16 2) 45m, 20. Crux is jamming through the roof and stemming. 3) 45m, 19 4) 70m, 15 5) 50m, 17. FA: Mick Ling, John Fry. 12/11/95

### 16 Dear Landlord 144m 20

The central ridge. Ignore the various short crags and stick to the obvious ridge. Work out the best place to start, follow your senses and enjoy the freedom of route finding. 4 pitches. FA: Mick Ling and John Fry. February 1996

### 17 Bonded 220m 18

The RH ridge. 5 pitches FA: Mick Ling and John Fry. February 1996

### 18 Into The Mystic 90m 16

To the R of above, beginning at the last bit of decent rock before the cliffline heads around the corner and up the hill to Tenant Buttress. Begins on the L of the buttress, but forced R. The division into 5 pitches gives some indication of the variety and complexity of the route. FA: Robert McMahon, Brett Duhig 8/10/77

## TENANT BUTTRESS

The regular columnar cliff which faces west, the mountain's last aesthetic stand before the cliffs become ragged and scrubby along the flanks towards Jacob's Ladder. Access via the scree slope that comes down to the road about 1km past the Rangers Station. Trend R up the scree and follow the cliffline around the corner and up the hill, a steep 800m walk. Alternatively, from Carr Villa go up the walking track, then across the scree past the Pavilion and Snake Buttress, about 45 minutes this way but not as steep. Take some long slings to abseil from bollards for descent from most of the routes, otherwise it is a steep scramble down the gully over the back, and L of the main ridge. Some excellent one pitch cracks reminiscent of Frews Flutes.



Afternoon sun,  
west facing cliff



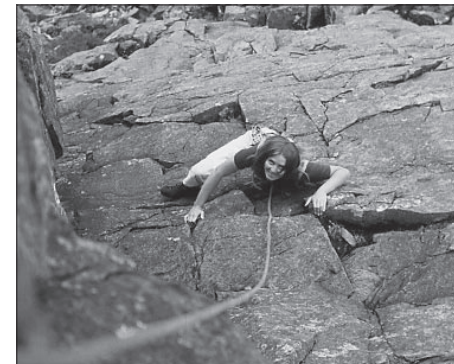
30-40 minutes,  
steep scree slope

### 19 Tenant Ridge 150m 18 \*

A big mountain route ascending the ridge. A poor man's Rock-A-Day Johnny. Start on the first buttress at the base of the ridge, and climb the ridge direct, not the cracks on the front of this buttress. 1) 40m, 16. Excellent and varied up a twin crack system- bridging and jamming. 2) 50m. Climbs the prominent jam crack on the arête of the ridge. Difficult, rather thin in places, but with good rests (possibly harder than 18). 3) & 4). Easy. FA: Robert McMahon, Robin Thompson 19/1/78

### 20 Five Star Frog 20m 22 \*\*

The LH line on the lowest buttress of the ridge. Scramble up steeply, roping up if necessary to the ledge below the climb. The climb initially takes a thin crack in a shallow corner which opens up to hand jams, then curves slightly L over a bulge, then becomes very thin up to the belay ledge. Strong jamming leads to a strenuous finger tip layback conclusion high up in the corner. A little dirty for the first couple of metres, then classic crack climbing for the rest. Would be 5 stars at Frog. FA: Gerry Narkowicz and Andrew Martin. 29/12/07



Susie McMahan on V.D Blues (10) at Snake Buttress.

**21 Mighty To Save** 35m 24 \*\*

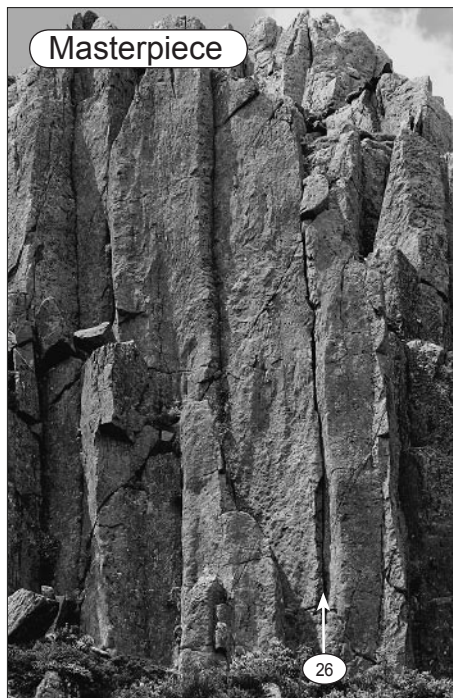
The RH twin crack line on the lowest buttress of the ridge, with a thin crack on the L and an offwidth on the R. Start at a short, steep hand crack behind a pillar which goes up for 10m to the ledge below the twin cracks. Up the steep hand crack (18) to belay on the ledge. Start in the thin crack on the R up to a short section of wide crack before stepping L into a hand crack leading up to a horizontal break at half height below the offwidth crack. Move L at the horizontal break into the LH crack which starts with hand jams but becomes progressively thinner. Towards the top when the crack blanks out, move L spectacularly onto the arête via a layback flake (crux) and up to the top. FA: Gerry Narkowicz, Andrew Geeves, and Ben Veltkamp. 26/1/08

**22 No Vacancy** 30m 18 \*

On the upper tier immediately L of the second pitch of Tenant Ridge (crack directly up arête) is a thin jam crack. Starts as a finger crack behind a short chimney. Chimney to the ledge then continue up the jam crack which you end up laybacking to get onto the ledge at 15m height. Up the next short corner and onto the belay. Abseil from sling around bollard. A good climb worth doing. FA: Andrew Geeves, Gerry Narkowicz and Ben Veltkamp. 28/1/08

**23 Rockin In The Free World** 25m 21 \*\*\*

On the upper tier immediately R of the second pitch of Tenant Ridge (the main arête) is a prominent hand crack, clearly the best line on the buttress. The most perfect crack imaginable. Starts as a thin hand crack then widens to perfect hand width, then widens again to a short section of offwidth near the top. The offwidth is not so bad as good hand jams can be found deep in the crack. At the ledge, either continue up the offwidth via big faceholds on the L (no gear), or step around L and do the last 10m of No Vacancy. FA: Gerry Narkowicz and Andrew Geeves. 26/1/08

**24 Leapfrog** 20m 17 \*

On the small buttress which sits further back from the ridgeline on the other side of a gully, are several neat corner cracks. This route climbs the twin cracks towards the RH end, the second last decent line on the buttress going from left to right. Pleasant jamming in the corner to gain a small ledge just below the top, followed by a tricky layback move up the top groove. FA: Andrew Martin and Gerry Narkowicz. 29/12/07

**25 Extreme Frog** 18m 14 \*

The next line to the R, the last decent line on the buttress on the RH end. A neat hand crack with a couple of small ledges. Pleasant enough and worth doing. FA: Andrew Martin and Gerry Narkowicz. 29/12/07

**26 Masterpiece** 25m 19 \*\*

About 30m R of Tenant Buttress is a neat crack on a small buttress, going up a peapod feature for 5m, then a nice straight crack up to the apple wedge shaped boulder on top. FA: Bill Chilvers and Robert McMahon. 1995

**Wuthering Heights****WUTHERING HEIGHTS**

A very confusing but atmospheric place of labyrinthine complexity about 50 R (west) of Tenant Buttress. Ed Mallinson thought he could learn to fly here one winter, but only managed to plant himself deep in snow from a great height.

**27 Branwell** 45m 15 \*

Tucked away up high is a rather superb "boiler-plate cliff". Branwell takes the best line there and is well worth doing. FA: Robert McMahon, Howard Smith 1977

**28 Queequeg** 90m 12

A route just worth doing on the largest cliff in the centre of the Heights about 50m R of above. Ascends fairly obvious leaning corner - shabbily reminiscent of V.D. Blues. FA: Robert McMahon, Howard Smith 1977

**SNAKE BUTTRESS**

The ramparts three hundred metres east of the Pavilion. Snake Buttress is a big chunk of rock which leans against the main cliffline. Approach as for the Pavilion, then continue across the scree slope. Good place to introduce beginners to multi-pitch climbing.



All day sun,  
north facing.

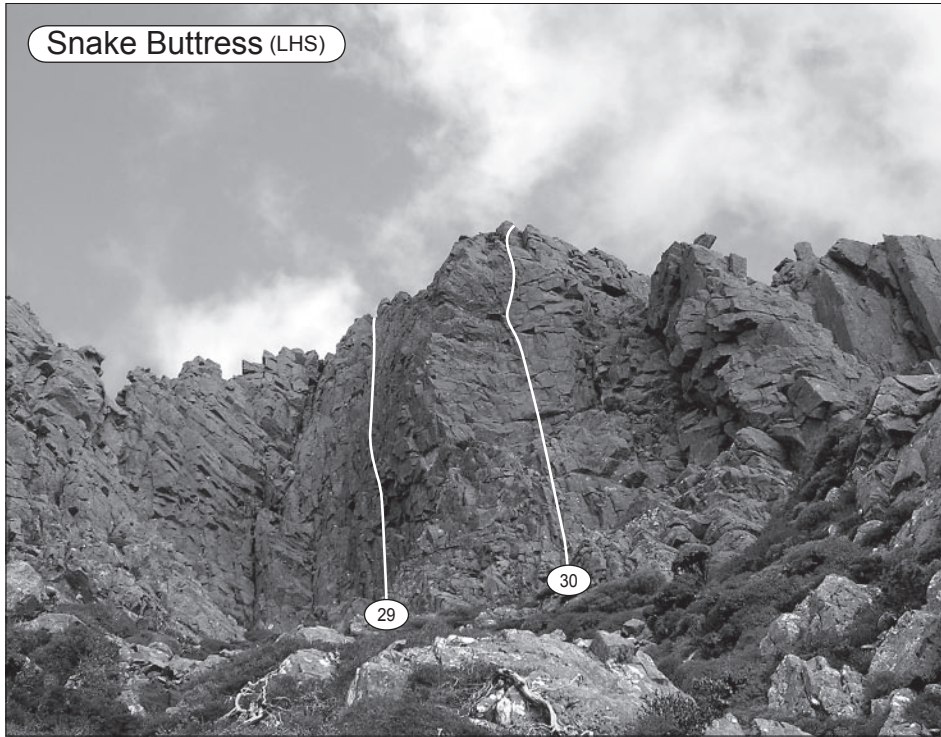


40 minutes, some track,  
then scree slope

**29 Kolokotrones** 50m 13

About 50m L (east) of Snake Buttress there is a face tucked away up the gully which is the LH face of the cliff which Snake Buttress leans against. A mediocre zig-zag rising traverse line, the only obvious one on the cliff, steep and shattered in places. FA: Robert McMahon and Ian Johnston. 8/1/74

Snake Buttress (LHS)



**30 Mavrocordatos** 45m 14

The amazing slashed face on the L of Snake Buttress and up the gully. Very awkward, steep moves zig-zagging up angular blocks. FA: Robert McMahon, Ian Johnston 8/1/74

**31 V.D Blues** 95m 10 \*

An excellent beginners route. The easy version of VD Waltz. Identical to it except first pitch takes L slanting line. FA: Robert Frew, David Burnett 1973

**32 V.D Waltz** 95m 14 \*

1) Ascend steep face on R side of Snake Buttress. 2) Up to top of buttress to an airy, high mountain belay. 3) Either up L on main wall (easy) or up R across slab for rather more tremulous finish (McMahon, Cover, Barnes). FA: Michael McHugh and Robert McMahon 9/1972

**33 Frew's Route** 60m 10

Where the buttress joins the back wall on the right. Not a good climb. FA: Robert Frew, David Burnett 1974

**34 Sweet Surrender** 60m 15 \*

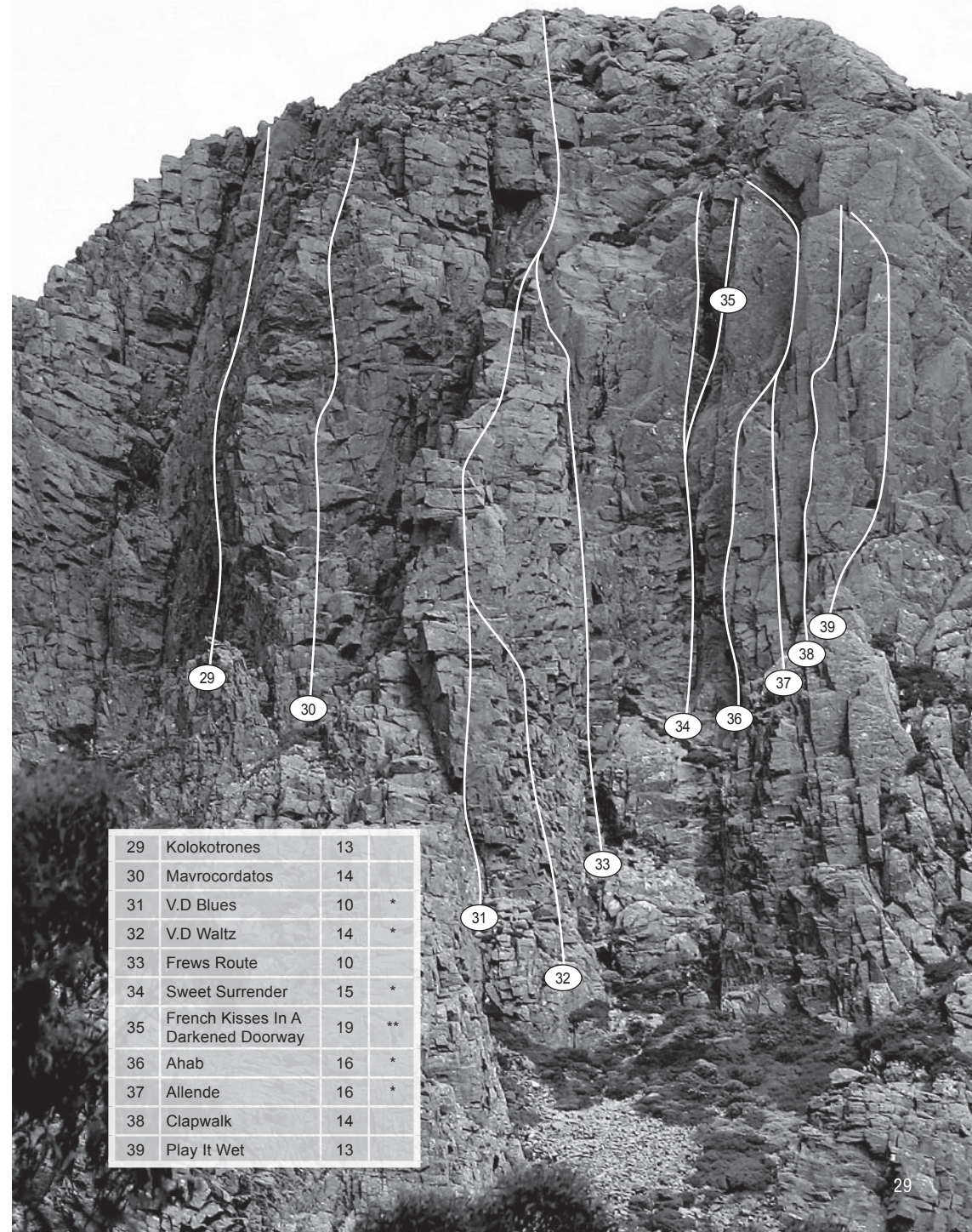
A good climb on the back wall up the only obvious line, bridging round two roofs. FA: Robert McMahon and Ben Maddison, Robin Jacques 18/2/79

**35 French Kisses In A Darkened Doorway** 20m 19 \*\*

A variant finish to the previous climb. Climb the intermittent crack up precise face to R of belay (top first pitch). This climb faces east and is not clearly visible from below. A highly sustained and technical climb. FA: Ben Maddison and Robert McMahon 18/2/79

**36 Ahab** 60m 16 \*

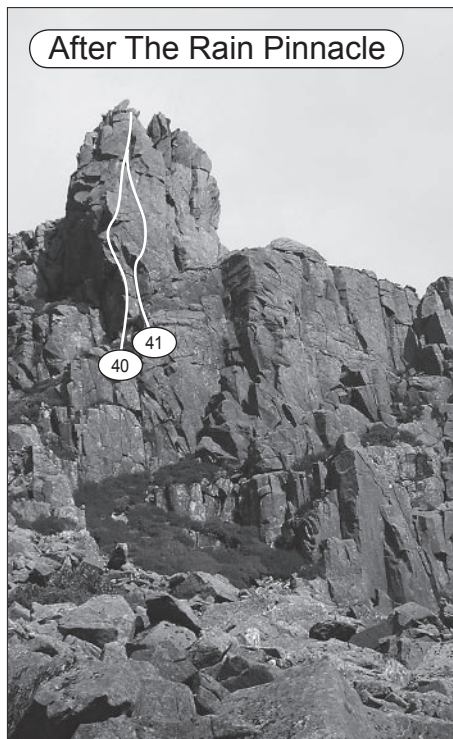
An old fashioned climb to the R of Sweet Surrender where the RH face leans against the back wall. Amazingly contorted bridging required on the great slanting groove. Could be 18 or harder. A route for the person who likes bridging. "I loved it." (McMahon). FA: Robert McMahon and Ian Thomas 22/1/79



29	Kolokotronos	13	
30	Mavrocordatos	14	
31	V.D Blues	10	*
32	V.D Waltz	14	*
33	Frews Route	10	
34	Sweet Surrender	15	*
35	French Kisses In A Darkened Doorway	19	**
36	Ahab	16	*
37	Allende	16	*
38	Clapwalk	14	
39	Play It Wet	13	



Noddy Lockwood on the first ascent of *Eliphaz* (14) in 1978.



**37 Allende 60m 16 \***

1) The first crack on the L of the RH face (crux).  
2) Up to the big roof and goes out L under the big roof (very easy). FA: Robert McMahon and Ken Smith 1973

**38 Clapwalk 50m 14**

Right of Allende. Climb beautiful angular face, making for obvious line near top of cliff. A difficult bridging move for crux (possibly harder than 14). FA: Robert McMahon, Robin Thompson 19/1/78

**39 Play It Wet 50m 13**

A bit of prancing around on the face R of Allende. A mode of cowardice escaping from all problem moves by moving R. Cut back L when the going gets easy and gain summit. FA: Robert McMahon and Lyle Cross 27/12/78

**40 After The Rain 30m 18 \*\***

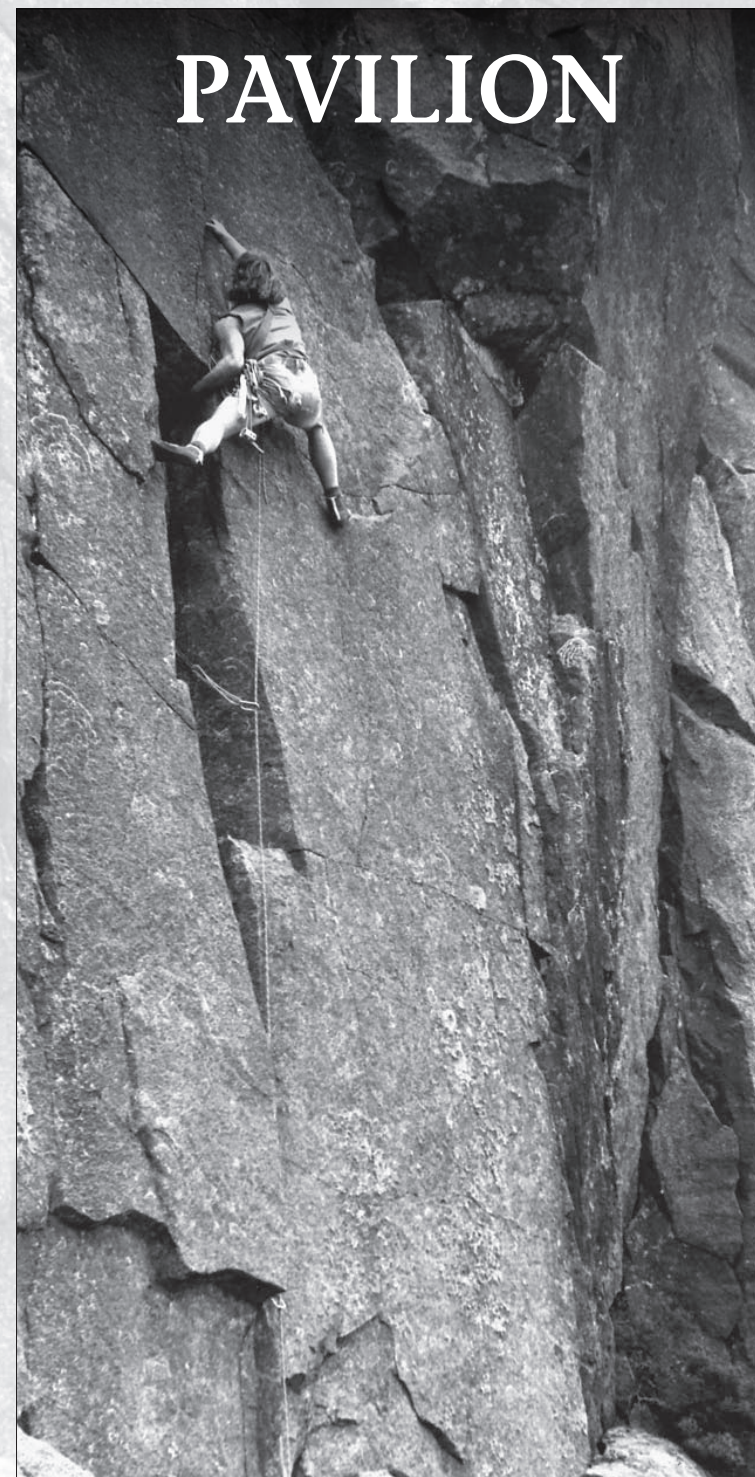
A beautiful "boulder" pinnacle about 100m west of the Snake. Begin with strenuous pull on L edge and work methodically through a series of baffling "set piece" moves, ticking off each move as you do it. A collection of boulder problems strung together in a climb, basically following the LH arête of the buttress. FA: Ben Maddison and Robert McMahon 18/2/79

**41 Had I Heaven's Embroidered Cloths 30m 21 \*\*\***

Start in the corner immediately R of the above climb on the boulder pinnacle. Bridge up the corner then turn the roof (crux) on the R to gain the thin crack up the middle of the face. FA: Robert McMahon and Mick Ling, Gerry Narkowicz 13/3/82

**42 Heart Of Glass 20m 15**

Slightly right of and below the boulder pinnacle is a scrappy face. Not sure where this one goes, but recorded for history's sake. FA: Brett Duhig, Robert McMahon and Chris George



Ben Maddison leading the first ascent of the classic *Brother Jack Straw* (20) in 1978.



■ INTRODUCTION

The Pavilion is the steep 100m high, blocky wave of a cliff about 1km to the east of Carr Villa. It offers some of the best face climbing on the mountain. The lines generally take grooves and intermittent cracks up through bulges and overhangs with protection spaced but good on most routes. Climbing here often takes a leap of faith, heading up into blankness wondering where the next hold or runner is coming from, but reaching blindly over a bulge there usually materializes a good jug or a pocket for protection. When people think of Ben Lomond they generally think of marathon jam cracks. The Pavilion is a great alternative and easier access than the Flutes. No tape required!

■ ACCESS

From Carr Villa take the main bushwalking track which starts beside the Scout Hut, and walk for 15 minutes to a spot level with the base of the cliff, and just before the walking track starts to rise steeply up the hill. Head across the scree slope traversing underneath the cliffs. The first buttress passed is the Fierce Archer area, some prominent short corner cracks on the far RHS of the Pavilion. Descent: Scramble down the western slopes of the peak to the scree slope gully beside Fierce Archer buttress.



All day sun, north facing.

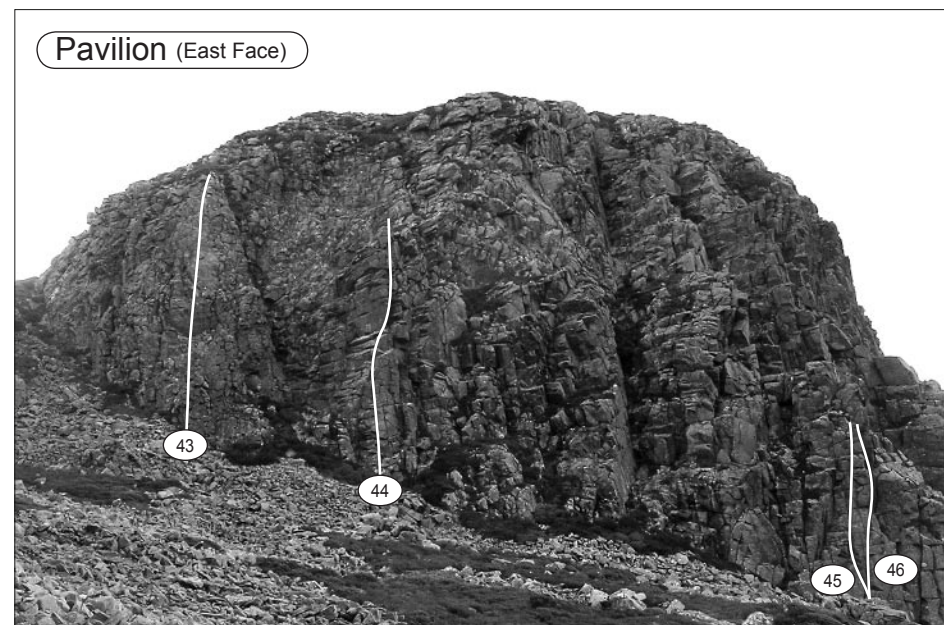


30 minutes, 15 minutes on track, then scree slope

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**SMALLER BUTTRESSES ON EAST FACE OF PAVILION**

**43 Stope 60m 16**

The slab up L on the east face of the Pavilion. Easy with short steep wave. FA: Brett Duhig and Robert McMahon. December 1979

**44 Eliphaz 45m 14**

The largest buttress on the east face shaped like the superstructure of a battleship. 1) Up face. 2) Up corner and easily through roof. FA: Robert McMahon, Noddy Lockwood 10/3/78

**45 Malatesta 30m 13**

Move downhill to smaller buttress. Airy position finishing up centre of prow moving over the jutting blocks of the cowling summit. FA: Robert McMahon, Noddy Lockwood 10/3/78

**46 Zapata 45m 15**

A varied climb. Begins in the groove R of Malatesta buttress. Climb over lip, through gap and up face. FA: Noddy Lockwood, Robert McMahon 10/3/78

**WALL OF LORDS (WALL OF HORRORS)**

*On the LHS of the cliff is a steep NW facing wall separated from the main cliff by a huge cleft.*

**47 Back Passage 100m 15**

The companion route to *Lords* and on the ridge L of that climb. Goes up the flaring corner on the L side of the buttress - inferior climbing. However the ridge above is better than *Lords*. FA: Robert McMahon, Howard Smith 1976

**48 Shibboleth 105m 17**

The direct start to *Back Passage* up the face of the buttress through the overhangs. Can be escaped from at the top out L (just). Otherwise continue to top. FA: John Smart and Robert McMahon, Shane Carson 3/79

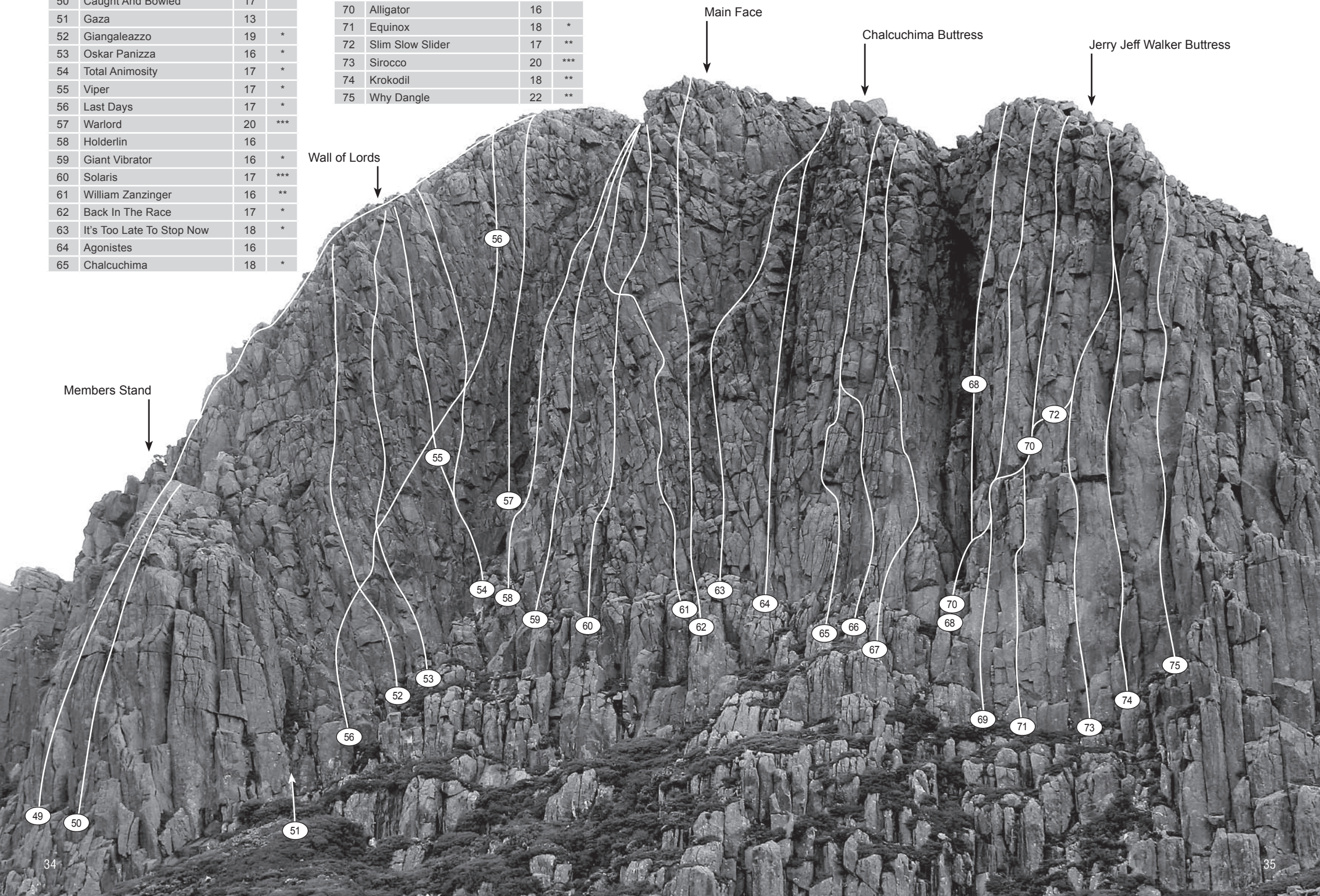
**49 Lords 130m 14**

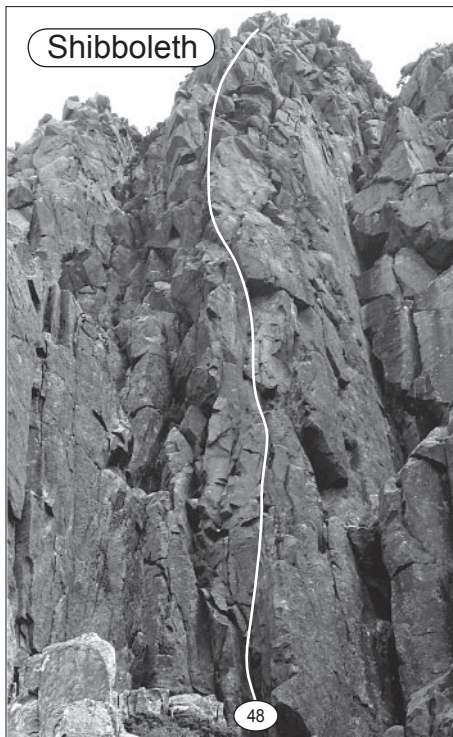
Ascends main ridge on L of cliff and was first route done. Crux is first pitch and begins on L side of Members Stand (buttress projecting from base of ridge) and after 15m moves R onto face. Straightforward blocky ridge above. FA: Michael McHugh and Robert McMahon 10/72

# Pavilion

49	Lords	14	
50	Caught And Bowled	17	*
51	Gaza	13	
52	Giangleazzo	19	*
53	Oskar Panizza	16	*
54	Total Animosity	17	*
55	Viper	17	*
56	Last Days	17	*
57	Warlord	20	***
58	Holderlin	16	
59	Giant Vibrator	16	*
60	Solaris	17	***
61	William Zanzinger	16	**
62	Back In The Race	17	*
63	It's Too Late To Stop Now	18	*
64	Agonistes	16	
65	Chalcuchima	18	*

66	Leberknecht	16	
67	Pavane	17	**
68	Sudden Tremors	18	**
69	Brother Jack Straw	20	***
70	Alligator	16	
71	Equinox	18	*
72	Slim Slow Slider	17	**
73	Sirocco	20	***
74	Krokodil	18	**
75	Why Dangle	22	**





**53 Oskar Panizza** 100m 16 \*

The L wall of the gully that divides the cliff. About 50m up the gully locate a light grey rockfall scar to the R of which is a steeply inclined ramp about a foot wide. This ramp is the beginning of Oskar Panizza and provides neat and technical climbing. The crux is about 15m up and necessitates moving over a bulge onto the slab above. The pitches divide into approximately 30m each and although a number of options are open, the climb follows the structural tendency of the cliff beginning at the foot of the ramp and tending L for 50m, then cutting back R for a further 30m, and then continuing upwards and L for the last section. A short section of technical face climbing terminates the route. FA: Robert McMahon and Robert Frew (alt). 6/10/73

**54 Total Animosity** 90m 17 \*

Shares same start as *Viper* up gully 10m past *Oskar Panizza*. The start is the only one obviously possible up the amazing fused wall with no protection. Aim for suspended slab at 30m. Getting onto "slab" (in fact a wall) is the crux. Avoid blind scooping corner above (unprotected) by moving up R parallel to it. FA: Ben Maddison and Robert McMahon 25/11/78

**55 Viper** 130m 17 \*

Begins further up the gully from *Oskar Panizza* opposite two boulders. 1) 40m. A rising L traverse unprotected for 20m, then traverse R involving precarious bridging to a notch in the face, followed by a further traverse R until a belay is reached directly above the belayer on the ground. 2) 40m. Rising L with occasional awkward sections. Intersect *Oskar Panizza* and ascend for a short distance approximately 20m from the top of that climb. 3) 50m. Traverse R with some excellent face climbing to the top. FA: Robert McMahon and Michael Joyce. 2/1/74

**56 Last Days** 150m 17 \*

A great rising traverse of Wall of Lords which begins up slabs L of *Giangaleazzo*, moves R across face crossing all routes at about half height, into depths of chasm. 1) 50m. L of *Giangaleazzo*, ascend easy angled slabs for a whole ropelength. Pleasant climbing. 2) 20m. Initially committal moves up R – traverse horizontally R, excellent climbing that crosses the second pitch of *Giangaleazzo*. 3) 23m. Traverse R rising gradually, exposure good, taking a belay at the top of the

**50 Caught And Bowled** 60m 17 \*

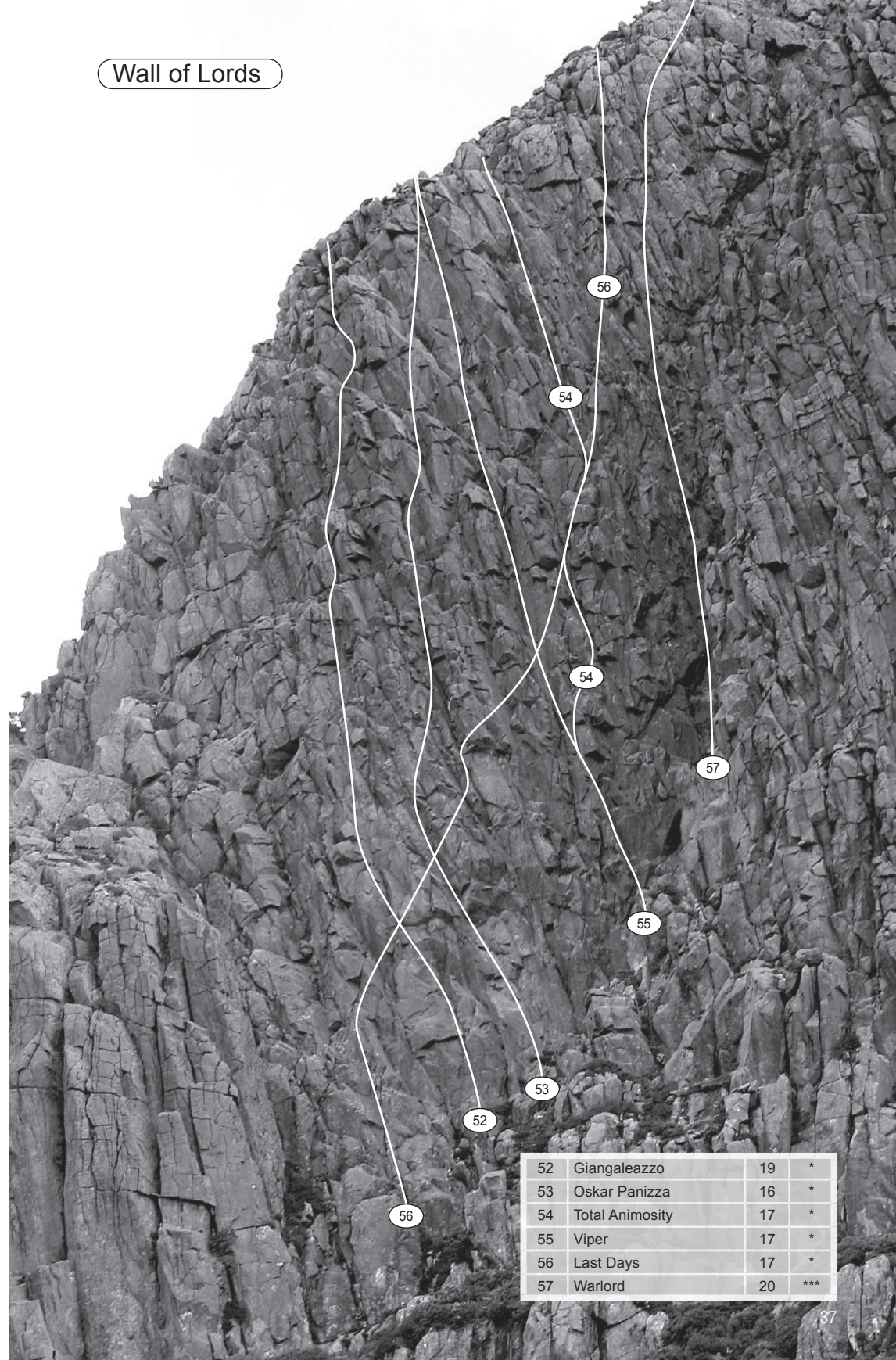
Superb route up the strange blocky face of the Members Stand (R of Lords) to obvious prow. At top, scramble down R or continue with Lords. FA: Ben Maddison and Robert McMahon 11/78

**51 Gaza** 30m 13

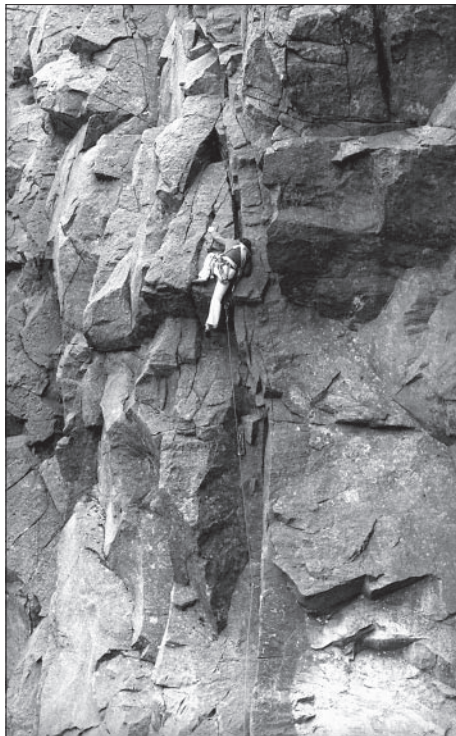
As you move into the chasm, this is the obvious L leaning crack on a prominent buttress. Possibly harder than graded. FA: Peter Morris, Ken Roseberry 1977

**52 Giangaleazzo** 90m 19 \*

Move into chasm and scramble up gully. Locate pale rock scar on Wall of Lords at ground level. *Giangaleazzo* begins L of it, aiming for a small roof at 25m. Up slab above roof traversing L for belay. From the end of the first pitch which is about 10m apart from *Oskar Panizza*, the line continues up steeply culminating in the overhang at the top of the second pitch. Pitches of 40m, 43m and 17m. FA: Robert McMahon and Geoff Wadley 23/10/73



52	Giangaleazzo	19	*
53	Oskar Panizza	16	*
54	Total Animosity	17	*
55	Viper	17	*
56	Last Days	17	*
57	Warlord	20	***



Mick Ling on a repeat of *Oskar Panizza* (16), one of the friendlier routes on the fearful Wall Of Lords.

second pitch of *Oskar Panizza*. 4) 40m. Keeping below the traverse pitch of *Viper*, but forced to take a direct line because of the increasingly blank upper gully wall. Belay in the middle of the last pitch of *Viper*. 5) 17m. Finish as for *Viper*. FA: Robert McMahon and Michael Joyce, Robert Frew. 11/2/74

**IMMORTAL**

**57 Warlord 100m 20 \*\*\***

In the depths of the *Wall of Horrors* and the most serious undertaking on the cliff. 1) The first attempt by McMahon involved a steep and unprotected first pitch of 30m (17). On the second attempt by Maddison he went right for a useless sling runner. 2) Through overhangs and quite cruxy. 3) A long totally sustained gripper. We vowed it would be a once only route, and so far it has been. FA: Ben Maddison, Robert McMahon (alt). 1979

**PAVILION MAIN FACE**

**RIGHT OF WALL OF LORDS CHASM**

**58 Holderlin 90m 16**

A direct ascent of the main prow of the Pavilion - steep and enjoyable. FA: Mendelt Tillemma and Robert McMahon 18/11/73

**59 Giant Vibrator 90m 16 \***

Second route on the Pavilion, and first route to demystify the overpowering steepness of the cliff. A sustained route of some difficulty. Up the obvious boot-shaped (map of Italy) feature with some insecure climbing and continue through the blocky roofs. FA: Michael McHugh, Robert McMahon, Richard Schmidt 10/72 & 1/73

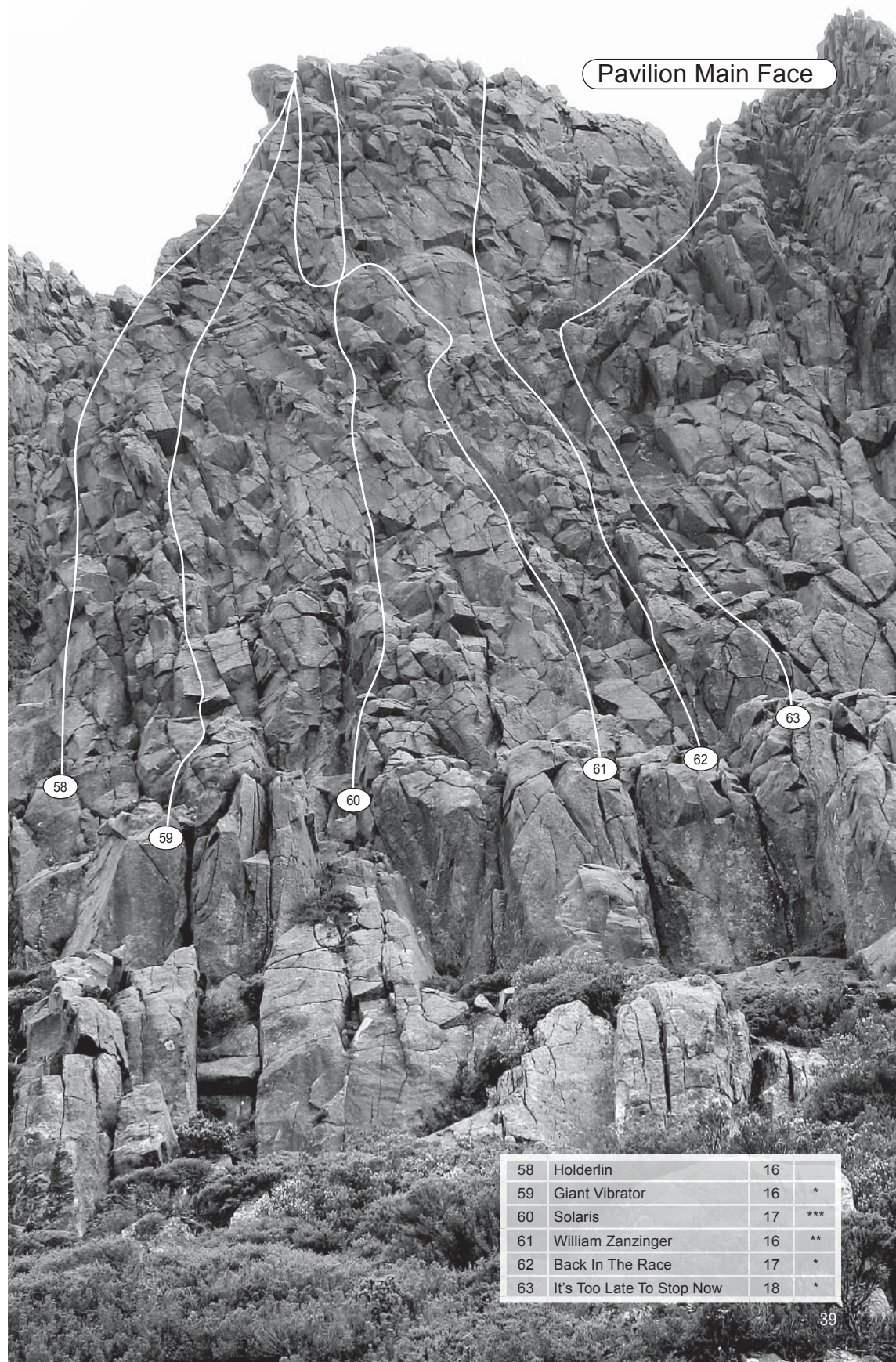
**IMMORTAL**

**60 Solaris 90m 17 \*\*\***

A superb route which climbs a direct route up the face of the buttress to the R of Wall Of Lords Gully. On the lower half of the cliff is a sheared off section with a series of thin cracks on it. Climb a scrappy pitch to the base of the sheared off face, or else traverse in from the gully over left. 1) 40m. Straight up the sheared off face for 15m, then trend slightly R via a series of grooves to belay on top of a block in the middle of the face. 2) 40m. Keep blasting straight up the wall to a belay ledge just below the top. 3) Easy to the top. FA: Ben Maddison, Robert McMahon (alt). 9/76

**61 William Zanzinger 90m 16 \*\***

A popular classic. 1) There are two L trending grooves below the slanting ledge. *Zanzinger* takes the lower and switches back R in a supremely exposed series of moves at the top of the groove to gain the ledge. 2) Short. Go L up an easy angled pinnacle. 3) Short exposed traverse to projecting block. 4) As for *Vibrator*. FA: Robert McMahon, Richard Schmidt 1/73



**Pavilion Main Face**

58	Holderlin	16	
59	Giant Vibrator	16	*
60	Solaris	17	***
61	William Zanzinger	16	**
62	Back In The Race	17	*
63	It's Too Late To Stop Now	18	*