

5th February 2009 (End of January 2009 bulletin)

Note from myself, Madam Chairman.

Hi everyone,

People have been doing lots of things in January, and as well as us chatting at club on a Tuesday about things that have gone on (providing the basis for this bulletin) it is great that some of you are e-mailing me with your exploits.

Day walks have again proved popular this month, starting with Mike Gavin's walk on 10th January 2009 attended by six people. It was a circular route starting at Rhosesmor and including the summit of Moel y Gaer, and over to Brynford and back via Linden Farm and Rhys y Cae. While this was happening Mike Dagley and Chris Russell were doing a winter route from Cwm Idwal called 'Nameless Stream', and they reported back as follows:

'Conditions were good. Ice was up to 10" thick and made for good ice screw placements though we preferred to use rock gear if possible (due to obvious thaw) and frozen turf. Much flowing water including some across top of ice. Very strong gusts of wind didn't help but it was very atmospheric with swirling cloud ripping over Twll Du. We topped out in dusk and walked out with torches.'

The following weekend saw Sunday rock-climbing with Allan et al, ? in the Moelwyns (Sorry this is a query, but my rough notes taken while doing O.B. on Tuesday night were very rough at this point - will try and do better next time).

Mike Mac's Thursday walk on 22nd January 2009 was attended by five people, and included the castles of Peckforton and Beaston. Then, on Saturday 31st January 2009 Dave Gray's walk revisited the general area (complementing, not repeating Mike's walk) with nine people walking eight miles over Bickerton Hill, Raw Head and Bulkeley Hill.

The 'Burns Night' bash at the Hut sounds like it was a good weekend - unfortunately we couldn't get to it as we had something else on - need to make sure the Burns Night next year is penciled in the diary straight away (23rd January 2010). Geoff did a great job with the catering (and after the Bonfire Do he is getting quite a reputation for successful large scale catering - do we see a potential career change here?). It didn't sound like a quiet affair, and it seems that the entertainment was colourful and varied with poetry readings, and live music c/o some prospective members who went along to see what the Hut was about. They were down at club on the Tuesday following the 'do' so it doesn't look like they were put off. As well as partying, there were ascents of Siabod, and a walk at the back of the Crimea Pass.

Lin and Paul were unable to attend the Burns Night as they were 'wintering in the Costa Blanca'. They have been away most of January, staying at Moraira, 6km from the coast between Calpe and Denia. As those who know Lin and Paul will be aware, they have lots of energy, doing a lot of walking whilst away and recommending the area as follows:

'Area covered by two Cicerone guides also good network of PR routes marked by yellow and white dashes. For those who don't know the area, there is masses to do. Coastal walking is spectacular with cliffs and coves. Many mountains above 1000m, as tough as you want to make it; paths are often steep and rocky due to the limestone terrain. Probably walked about 100 miles, 7 coastal routes, 8 tops including MONTGO in ferocious winds and several summits over 1000m.'

Janet and Chris Harris (prospective members) have also been away - to Seefeld in Austria, cross-country skiing for the first time. It sounds like they had a great time doing lots of mountain walking as well, with lovely weather, and a foot of fresh snow falling the day before they arrived. Having said this, they also learned something about cross-country skiing in case downhill skiers think they took the easy option:

'Little did we know that turning, stopping and snowplough are essential, as the runs are graded blue, red and black just like downhill but as you are on narrow trails there is nowhere to run off at the side. All this with only the toe of your boot attached to the thinnest, longest skis you can find. To add insult to injury, you have to walk up the hills on the skis.'

Looking ahead to the Annual Club Dinner at the Tyn-y-Coed Hotel in Capel Curig on 28th March 2009 Margaret plans to do a raffle again this year. So, if any of you have any unwanted gifts, or items that you would like to donate as a raffle prize, please get in touch with her.

Before that, the weekend after next in fact (14th February 2009), Dave Gray has arranged a camping-barn weekend, and there is one space remaining. If anybody is interested in joining the weekend, please get in touch with Dave. The camping-barn is at St. John's in the Vale, in the Lake District. Dave arranged a meet there last year, and put it on the meets list again this year as it was such a good weekend.

Regards.
Christine.