



Promoting Interest in Mountain Activities

The Gwydyr Monthly Newsletter May 2015

Hello and welcome to the May edition of the monthly newsletter.

What's On This Month

1-2 Brecon Beacons (Lindsey Fooks).

Margaret's birthday activity weekend.

15-16 Hut Weekend: cycle to hut (Chris Harris).

Gail's Birthday Ceildh.

22-30 Ullapool Self catering Week (Teresa Peddie).

Future Attractions!

June

5-6 Patterdale Hut Meet (Kevin McEvoy).

26-27 Hut Weekend: Welsh 3000s.

July

3-4 Bryncreg Camping Meet (Nuala)

11 Saturday Walk: Sandstone Trail (Chris Harris)

17-18 Hut Weekend: Prospective Members Meet (Kevin McEvoy)



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Recent Activity

April

2-6 Crianlarich (Geoff Brierley).

A party of eight GMC members assembled at the SYHA hostel in Crianlarich for the Easter weekend. Dave Gray and Jane Webster broke the journey up to Scotland by doing Ben Chonzie, one of the most southerly of the Munro's, on the way to our destination. I took the opportunity to do Tinto Hill, a Graham, just south of Lanark. I had first tried to do this particular hill as a ten year old boy with my father and sister many years ago only to be defeated by the weather. I had always planned to go back and finish it so I took advantage of a fine day and was rewarded by excellent views from the summit of the southern uplands and the Lake District hills, the southern highlands and the hills of Arran. This particular hill is only six miles from the Abingdon service station on the M74 and is a good choice if you want a quick hill on the way north.

Good Friday was not a great day in terms of weather, nonetheless Geoff, Neil, Kevin and John Simpson travelled down to the Arrochar Alps and did Ben Ime and Ben Narnain in difficult conditions. Dave Gray and Jane did a Graham, the name of which escapes me. Lindsey and, I after much debate, decided to do the tourist thing around Oban, a place Lindsey hadn't visited for a very long time.

The weather had improved a bit by Saturday, although the tops of the hills were still in low cloud. Geoff and the boys decided to do some of the hills in the Ben Lawers group. Dave and Jane did Ben nan Imirean. Lindsey and I did Meall Nan Tarmachan. This is only one Munro but there are a further three tops on the Tarmachan ridge and it is well worth doing even if we did not really have much in terms of views. The heavy snow conditions, with a tricky section where we had to down climb with the aid of ice axes, made for an interesting day out. The other groups also found the conditions with heavy soft snow and low cloud challenging, particularly with regard to navigation.

Easter Sunday was a glorious day, warm sunny and the summits were cloud free at last. Dave and Jane tackled Ben Challum. Lindsey and I joined forces with the lads and did Ben Lui and Ben a'Chleibh. The approach to Ben Lui involved a river crossing, which at this time of year was freezing, a wet, boggy path through the forest and then a long slog up the north west shoulder of the hill with increasing amounts of snow and ice as we approached the summit. Still the views from the summit were spectacular. We could see just about all the southern and central highland hills including Ben Nevis, Ben Hope on Mull, the Paps of Jura, Arran and the southern uplands. Worth all the effort and the disappointing weather the previous two days. After lunch and taking many photographs we dropped down to the bealach and then continued up to Ben a'Chleibh for more excellent views. We then returned back to the bealach and dropped down to eventually



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meet the path we had ascended. One of those days in the Scottish hills that will remain long in the memory.

On Easter Monday most of the group assembled for a full Scottish breakfast in the famous Station café at Crianlarich before the journey back south.

17-18 Members 70th Birthday Celebrations.

As you are probably aware five of our members will celebrate their 70th birthday this year, they are Margaret Blakeborough, Les Fowles, Dave Antrobus, Roger Hughes and Mike McEneany. In order to mark such an important milestone they decided to have a weekend at the chapel so that as many members as possible could join in the celebrations. One of the objectives of some of the group is to complete all the Welsh Corbett's in the calendar year. Therefore the weekend began with a mass ascent of Moel Hebog by twenty seven members of the GMC. The group comprised many members who were staying at the chapel and by others who had driven out from the Wirral for the day. Mr. McEneany must have connections in high places because the weather was fine, dry and sunny with quite a strong breeze. The party wound their way up to the summit at their own pace to be rewarded by excellent views and the sight of Geoff Brierley who had extended his training run from Snowdon to join us. It was good to see such a large group of the club out together particularly as the group contained some relatively new members as well as some weel kent faces!

After an off the hill drink in the Saracen's Head in Beddgelert the majority returned to the chapel for an evening of food, drink and celebration. It was a really good occasion so thank you to our septuagenarians for organizing the whole thing and providing the all the elements for a great weekend and to all those members who participated in one way or another.

24-25 Hut Weekend: St George's Day Celebrations.

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances I was unable to attend this event which has become well established over the last few years. However, I understand that it was a good event with Mr. Brierley providing an excellent meal. The weather was not great but I believe it did not stop members from doing a number of different things.

Committee News

The new committee had their first meeting on Tuesday 14th April and as well as the usual reports from the various post holders we discussed the continuing upgrading of the cottage. The minutes of this meeting are now available in the members' section of the website



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The next committee meeting is scheduled for the 19th May.

Other News

The last few weeks have been busy with meets and events coming thick and fast. The committee would just like to remind members that if you are unable to attend a meet or an event, could you please inform the organizer. This is particularly relevant to those meets or events which are extremely popular such as bonfire night or the annual dinner, or where places are limited such as Burns' night and St George's. There are times when unforeseen circumstances mean we are forced to miss meets or events we wanted to attend. I have found myself in such a position just recently. If this does occur could I ask members to inform (where possible) the people organizing the meet or event that you are unable to attend? This could mean that another member or members might be able to take your place as popular events and meets very often have waiting lists. Thank you.

Chairman's Thoughts

The spring thus far has been exceptional with lots of warm and very dry weather, although the last week has seen temperatures drop to nearer, or indeed in some cases below, the seasonal norm. As we move into May the days are certainly becoming much longer and we are entering the time of year when we begin to think about long days in the hills. Unfortunately May also tends to be when ticks start to become much more active. Those of you who went on the trip to Knoydart will be well aware of this! Ticks have always been a problem and generally they tend to be a harmless, albeit a rather unpleasant, side effect of being out on the hills. However, in recent years there has been a campaign to promote awareness that some ticks can in fact pass on Lyme disease to humans. You will probably have seen articles in the mountaineering press about this. If diagnosed early the Lyme disease is easily treated, however if it is not then it can become much more serious. The BMC have a leaflet on their website that can be downloaded which gives useful information and I would thoroughly recommend one of these tick cards you see in all the outdoor shops. They are great for removing ticks if you are bitten and they contain useful information as well. Don't let these wee beasties stop you from getting out on the hills but it pays to be prepared.

I don't have any recommendations this month but I hope to have something for the next newsletter.

Pete