



The Gwydyr Monthly Newsletter

December 2015

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

Future Meets

21 Dec -03 Jan	Christmas/New Year Meet at the Hut
9 January	Saturday Walk – Llangollen (Dave Gray)
23 January	Burns Night at the Hut

The full programme of meets for next year is now available on the website. Just click on the meet for further information and arrangements (if logged in as a member)

Last Month

Saturday Walk on 31 October - Saddle Fell, Fair Snape fell and Parlick by Janet Cotes

The walk started in Chipping, a picturesque and historic village situated in the south west of the Forest of Bowland, 5 miles from Longridge.

The 12 walkers were John Simpson, Jane Webster, Helen Avison, Dave Chadwick, Dave Antrobus, Chris & Janet Harris, Roger Harris, Helen & Glenn Grant, Milly Wright and Janet Coates. The group left the village and walked north-westerly past two defunct cotton mills, one of which Kirk Mill is being renovated and was originally an 18th century water powered corn mill. We left the lane taking a footpath opposite the large mill pond and walked across the fields to Saddle End Farm. Here we started the ascent of Saddle Fell on clearly marked grassy tracks, and in extremely humid conditions.

On arriving at the summit of Fair Snape Fell West we did not have the expected distant views to the Yorkshire 3 Peaks and the Lancashire coast as the cloud was descending. We stopped on the summit to admire the newly built stone shelter and the trig point decorated with the red rose of Lancaster (see Millie in the photo).



The route then descended south-east along a grassy ridge to the top of Parlick where we watched a couple of paragliders descend into the valley. On arriving back in the valley we walked along lanes returning to Chipping and observed our previously walked route disappear into the rapidly descending cloud.

An easy and interesting route of 8 miles with ascent of 1520 feet.

Bonfire Party Weekend (6/7 November)

The Bonfire Party weekend was a well-attended and popular event as usual. Very many thanks to Kev and Vanda for organizing the event and for cooking a splendid meal for us all. Hot food, cold beer and entertainment all for £12 per person – what more could you want. Perhaps the highlight of the evening was the demonstration of wood carving with a chain saw

Thursday 28 November - The Final Welsh Corbett by Mike McEneaney

To celebrate a significant anniversary for five of our senior members, they have been making ascents of the 14 Welsh Corbetts. “The final ascent was on Moel Siabod on Thursday 18th November. Fifteen members & friends took part. In total thirty nine people have participated in the event over the 2015 calendar year. A tremendous achievement & many thanks to all who supported us.

On the final day the weather was a little unkind. We left the Club Hut in light rain, although the forecast for the day was mainly dry. As we reached the old slate mine the rain increased. (The photo shows a rather damp group at the slate mine)



We passed a very boggy Llyn Foel and started up the ridge during a dry spell, but as we put our heads over the parapet, to reach the summit, we were greeted with hail and gale force winds. Lunch 2 was abandoned, so was a group photograph. We made a hasty retreat down towards Plas y Brenin”

Saturday Walk on 21 November by Mark Barley

Seven GMC members met in the car park in Compstall for a Saturday walk through Etherow and Werneth Low country parks in the hills to the east of Manchester. The weather started crisp and cold and although it clouded up in the afternoon there had been a smattering of snow on the hills (and the higher points of our walk) during the night.



After visiting the war memorial at Hackingknife - we stopped for lunch at some picnic tables which provided enough snow for an exchange of snow balls after lunch (thanks Glenn). We had a short stop to get warm at a pub in Werneth Low and then returned to the cars via a section of the Peak Forest canal.

Tuesday Evening Talk – 8 December

We were entertained with talks and photographs from members' holidays this year.

Geoff and Anna had been to Slovakia to celebrate Geoff's 40th, and Geoff showed us some great photos of the trip.

On the Club meet to Ullapool in late May, Glenn Grant was injured and could not join the rest of us on walks, so he took himself off on various expeditions. He showed us the photos of his trip to the most northern part of mainland Britain at Cape Wrath.

The Club meet to Chamonix in early September was a huge success with 16 of us staying in a luxury chalet. We climbed mountains by foot (Mont Buet at over 10,000ft) and by cable car to the top of the Aiguille de Midi (over 12,500 ft), went rock climbing and took to the skies by paragliding. Chris showed us some of his photos, with spectacular views from the top of the Aiguille de Midi, and of the almost equally spectacular view from the back of our chalet (see photo)



Saturday 12 December

The Christmas party at The Dee Hotel in West Kirby was well attended by 43 members, plus Paul Sinclair, a prospective member who attended with his wife. Everybody appeared to have a good time, and we were very pleased to see old members Mike Dunn and Mike Davies. Although they no longer get out into the hills and have given up their membership, they are very welcome at our social events.

Chairman's Thoughts by Geoff Brierley

At this time of year it is traditional to consider the past twelve months and also to look forward to the coming twelve.

However, I think for us as a club this year it's important to consider the last twelve as part of a wider view – that of the last 48 years.

When looking back one should certainly consider those who are owed thanks, and I would like to wholeheartedly thank Pete Mann for his unstinting contribution to the club over his term as chairman. I know that all of the committee feel the same as I do, and that we, and all members I'm sure, send Pete best wishes in his move North.

The club's history is filled with contribution, personal and collective and it is this spirit which has, and continues, to make us a stronger more vibrant and fun club. The GMC has gone from strength to strength in the time that I have been a member, and this continues to increase.

Our website and other electronic communications have allowed a sharing of activities to enable our club to expand beyond its previous horizons, the advent of private and public groups online allow us to engage with each other and others like never before, yet the Tuesday night meetings continue to attract existing and new members and provide a vibrant exchange of experiences. The new slideshows provide a fantastic example of this.

The Tuesday evenings are also a link. They are a link to our past as a club. On one such evening, one of the founding events of the GMC took place at the Horse and Jockey in Upton, the inaugural meeting of founders, John, Penny and Les and the other founder members after an advert was placed in the Liverpool Echo.

We all arrive as strangers and through one shared interest we form bonds, and from here the club becomes a part of our lives. For me it's not only a part of my life but a part of me. It has grown as I have and as new members have joined it has changed. I think that's inevitable. This constant change ensures survival, it really comes down to change or perish and the club manages change whilst keeping traditions alive, those traditions that mean so much to us all.

The GMC has changed and managed to stay familiar, been proactive, attracted new members both locally and further afield and we are the stronger for it, have improved the Chapel and cottage, built on our constitution.

I could go on.

As John Huxley said in his history of the Gwydyr Mountain Club "Members are what make a club. This may seem like stating the obvious, but really one should go further and say that the members are the club and the club consists of the members: the two are indivisible. The club has no separate existence in itself"

We have a lot to be grateful for and a lot to be proud of, as we look back on a successful 2015 and the 48 years that preceded it, and forwards to 2016 and beyond – and to 2017 the clubs 50th Anniversary year.

To the Gwydyr.