



# The Gwydyr Mountain Club Newsletter

October 2021

Edited: Chris Harris

## News Headlines:

**2022:** Time to think about what trips and day events you could help with on the 2022 meets list.

**Cottage update:** Richard and DLJ went out to the cottage to move the large furniture into the hut. The lounge and dining room ceilings were plastered by Paul and Nicky has painted them and the walls. Richard and Bill have returned the furniture to the cottage now and it is much improved. Nicki has been organising other painting internally.

**Climbing:** David L-J tells me that there is a regular indoor climbing meet at 10 am Monday mornings at The Boardroom, Queensferry.

There have been meetings at 7pm Thursday evenings at The Boardroom. However, there have been no newcomers, so it is under debate that they move the Thursday meeting to the morning as this appeals more to the existing participants.

Please contact David if you want to get involved or have any thoughts on the matter.

**Chapel Windows:** Glenn tells me that after a bit of chasing he's had an update from Snowdonia Windows. The surveyor who met Richard is just finishing off the drawings and will send us a copy shortly.

The surveyor is talking to the windows supplier and once they get a supply date they will then schedule an install date. With the length of supply time we are now talking sometime Q1 2022 , they would not commit any further than that at this stage.

**Tyn y Coed:** Neil Metcalfe tells me; "We haven't got a lot to tell in regards to the Tyn-y really.

As you probably know they were meant to exchange contracts for 1st October & this was put back to 1st November to allow all matters to be resolved. However it seems there are still some details still to be ironed out and as a consequence the date maybe extended even further."

If you are intending to go there it would be wise to phone to see if they will be open.

**Ash Dieback:** The council have condemned one of the trees alongside the road at the chapel. It will have to be cut down rather than felled as it is big and may damage the buildings. I have also arranged for an arborist to check the condition of all other trees on our site (about 10). If a tree falls in a storm then we are usually covered by insurance, if it falls due to decay or disease we are not insured.

**2022 meets list:** Please think about trips and day walks you could contribute for the 2022 meets list.

**Coming soon:**

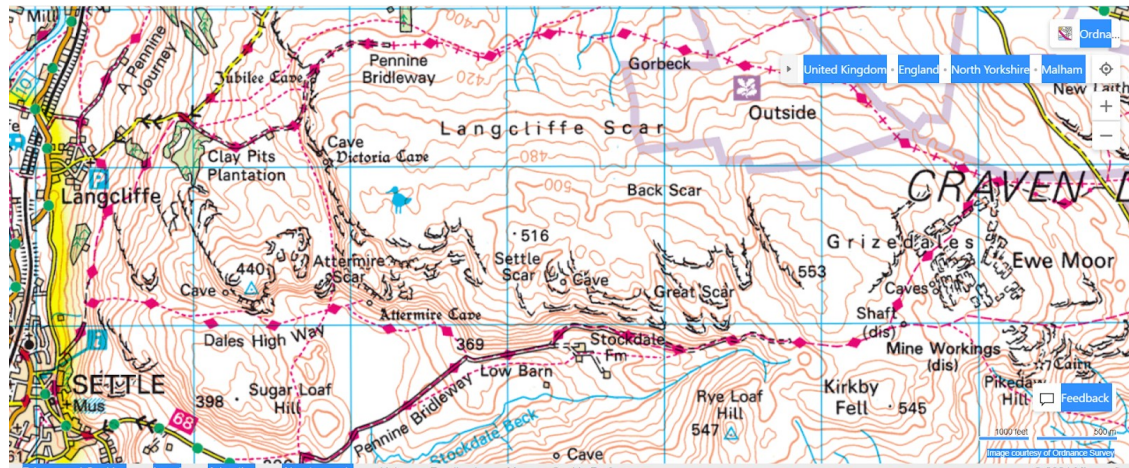
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| 5-7 November   | Bonfire Party: Viking Theme Fancy Dress                     |
| 19-21 November | Hut Weekend   |
| 27 November    | Saturday Walk: Llantysilio Hills (Horseshoe pass to Carrog) |
| 3-5 December   | Hut Weekend   |
| 11 December    | Saturday Walk: Bryn Alyn                                    |

**Articles this month**

- 1) Dales Mid-Level – A Circular Walk from Langcliffe by Dave Gray
  - 2) Lundy Island Climbing Trip - 7th to 14th September by Melinda Kinsman
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**1) Dales Mid-Level – A Circular Walk from Langcliffe by Dave Gray**

Early in September I went for a few days to stay in a static caravan near Gisburn on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. I had three good days hill walking and one day bird watching, all in good weather. But the discovery of the trip was a fine varied mid level walk from Langcliffe, north of Settle, which I think is worth sharing more widely.



I reckon this is – after Malham Cove, Gordale Scar etc. - the best mid level walk I have done in the Dales. It's about 9.5 miles long, on generally good dry tracks and paths. The ascent is modest, well under 1000 feet I reckon. I think it's worth saving for a good day so you get the very fine views it affords.

Here is an overview map of the circuit at 1:50,000. This is from OS Landranger sheet 98. It's far easier though to navigate with the 1:25,000 map, which is OS Explorer sheet OL2. I parked at the reasonably large village car park in Langcliffe by the old school, GR 823651. This runs an honesty box, minimum daily charge £2.



*Early - on view of Stainforth Scar*

Immediately opposite is a bridleway going east then south across fields towards Settle, we zig zag up this to join the minor road to Malham below Clay Pits Plantation at GR 829654.

The second arm of the zigzag is the Pennine Bridleway National Trail. This is a part of the Bridleway that is called the Settle Loop, and so we follow it for most of the way in fact.

At the road a good track then goes SE before swinging round to bring us below Jubilee Cave.



### *Into and out of Jubilee Cave*

You can easily go a few yards into the cave which is worth the effort to say you've been caving!



*Pen y Ghent, blue, green, and gold*

We then go NE and then broadly E following the red or green crosses and diamonds (on the most up to date maps that is!) of the byway that is heading for and signposted towards Langscar Gate. x

The byway crosses areas of grazing called Overclose, Gorbeck and the evocative Outside till we come south of Black Hill and trend SE below a line of small limestone scars to reach a junction with a bridleway at GR 881649. This northern arm of the circuit is very open and wild, a good track going through vast areas of red and golden moor grass. To the north there's great views of the 3 Peaks – Ingleborough, Wharfedale and Pen y Ghent. Further out I saw the distant bulge of Black Combe (from which you can on a very good day see all 6 countries of the British Isles!), looming pallid grey across Morecambe Bay.



*Limestone pavement, and looking back to Malham*

At the bridleway junction we turn SW and go on a hard grassy track past areas of limestone pavement looking back out to Malham Tarn. On this section the view opens to take in the south-eastern most part of the Dales. To the south, the fells of Simon Seat and Cracoe Fell form a dark wall. To the East, the distant view stretches to Buckden Pike above Wharfedale. After crossing three walls the re-erected medieval Nappa Cross appears on a large cairn to the right. Just beyond the cross the bridleway takes a sharp right at GR874640

and we head along it almost due west. The trackway descends, quite rough and rubbly underfoot, to go past the huge – and I think rather intrusive – buildings of Stockdale Farm.

On this section I helped out a couple of slightly uncertain younger guys, one from Switzerland and one from Slovenia, doing the Settle Loop the other way round but without a map. We had the brilliant idea of their photographing mine – isn't it wonderful sometimes! It was great to swap names and memories of the Julian Alps with the Slovene, on some of *our* best limestone scenery.

*Warrendale Knotts - sun and shadow at the west end of the scars*



*Attermire Cave*



For this southern arm of the circuit is in total contrast to the northern – yes my eye was drawn west to the distant grey of Pendle Hill and Bowland, but the main interest is the near at hand. An extensive system of limestone scars that rival Eglwyseg Crag at Llangollen, set in landscape of electric green fields and white walls.

About half a mile beyond the farm we leave the Pennine Bridleway and fork right at GR 847638 to take quite a small footpath WNW heading for Attermire Cave. I ended up in a bog here because I didn't pay attention to where the path actually goes! So do keep a watch out around here. Below Attermire Cave we go through a wall and again the path forks (GR 839641), this time our route goes almost due north heading for Attermire Scar quite steeply up a narrow valley. The path is on the west side of the wall at first and then soon goes through the wall to the east.

The other fork is another named trail – the Dales High Way no less. Not on my day though if the massive bull standing foursquare on it had anything to do with it!

Attermire cave towers above the path – visiting it looked like hard work to me! There were a few climbers on the crags nearby – a quick Google shows 244 routes on these crags.

The narrow valley soon flattens out and takes us past the less impressive Victoria Cave to rejoin and descend our outward route towards Clay Pits Plantation and Langcliffe. Taking my final rest just by the junction with the outward path I got a cheery wave from Messrs Switzerland and Slovenia - who'd got round this very satisfying walk a lot faster than I had!

## Lundy Island Climbing Trip - 7th to 14th September - Melinda Kinsman

When I talk about Lundy Island, I tell people it's my favourite place in the whole world. The island lies off the North Devon coast. It may only be 3 miles long by half a mile wide, but it's an amazing place to stay for anyone who enjoys nature, peace, solitude, history, and...climbing.

The sea cliffs along the Atlantic west coast of the island provide important summer breeding sites for many species of seabirds. So it's not until autumn, when the birds have left, that the main "climbing season" there begins.

You can stay in lots of fascinating old buildings on the island (done up and maintained by the Landmark Trust), but you generally need to book these a long time in advance. Earlier this year, however, the campsite was still showing availability for September. So, on Tuesday 7th September, DLJ, my husband, Rich, and I found ourselves boarding the MS Oldenburg from Ilfracombe. We were heading for a week's stay on Lundy - armed with a load of camping and climbing gear. For me and Rich, it would be our 4th week long stay there.

### Day 1 - Tuesday - Arriving, and a hot afternoon wander...



That first day was hot and sunny. Once we'd arrived, walked up the steep track from the jetty to the "village," and got our tents up, we'd only got the a few hours to explore.

We'd already warned David that Lundy had lots of "up and down bits" to get to the climbs, and that even finding a particular cliff could be challenging. He now also found out that Rich is impatient, and hates waiting to even read the climbing guide description on how to approach cliffs!

Searching for Pilot's Quay cliff...

So we set off to find a cliff with fairly easy climbs near the campsite, only to stagger up and down reaching 2 other cliffs first, then abandon our search when we realised the tide would soon be wrong to climb what we wanted to. At this point I also discovered I'd bought my camera with 3 spare batteries but no memory card in it! So, apart from a few iPhone photos, DLJ's camera would now be called upon to take all our photos for the week.

### Day 2 - Wednesday - Horseman's Route, then a wet 10k run



A beautiful sunrise



Rich and DLJ set off past the Old Lighthouse



One of the cannons at Battery Point

Cell phone reception on the island is sketchy, so each night we'd study the tide and weather charts in the Marisco Tavern. (The only pub on the island, and the community hub. Left open 24 hours a day, it provides a refuge for drowned out campers.)



Rich leading 2nd pitch of Horseman's Route - HS 4a

We knew rain was due later, and set off early for an easy climb (for Lundy) below Battery Point. With a walled set of steps leading down to the ruined battery buildings and cannons, we knew this route was easy to locate!

After abseiling down to the start of the route, we finally set off up some rock. Sadly David did not yet share our love for Lundy granite, and wasn't comfortable on it.. We knew his big aim for the week was to get up the iconic "Devil's Slide" slab climb on Lundy, but he felt he'd need more practice on easier ground before tackling that.

We finished the 2nd pitch (rope length) of today's route in the rain, then quickly packed up our ropes and headed back to the campsite in waterproofs. I was training to (very slowly) run a half marathon, so Rich and I now pulled on our running kit and got drenched running up and down the length of the island. This involved far more "up and down bits" than I remembered!!

### Day 3 - Thursday - Seal Slab



DLJ starting the abseil down



Heading up Seal Slab

Today's forecast didn't look great, and we wanted to find somewhere to get David's confidence up for climbing on Lundy rock. Seal Slab was the perfect place - a dramatic location, but easy climbing (a 55m Diff) that could be climbed in the wet. Oh, but it's surprisingly hard to find from the island's main grassy plateau!



2 seals chilling on a rock at the bottom

We again wandered around a lot, before successfully finding where we should abseil down from. As we climbed back up to our abseil point, David sadly still wasn't convinced he liked climbing on Lundy rock yet.

#### Day 4 - Friday - A wet walk, then a climb at Picnic Bay Cliff

With more rain forecast, and a drizzly start, all 3 of us pulled on waterproofs and headed for a walk to explore the gentler east coast. As things seemed to be improving, we then went in search of another cliff with easy grade climbing routes on it. As usual, finding it proved tricky, though it was quite spectacular once we got down there!

Rich let me lead (taking the rope up first) a “thuggy” damp route with big holds and ledges. Finally we’d found a route David felt confident on! (We didn’t like to tell him it was nothing like the “trust your feet” friction slab climbing of Devil’s Slide, but we suspected he knew...)



Exploring the east coast



Easy climbing at Picnic Bay Cliff

#### Day 5 - Saturday - Climbing Devil’s Slide, HS 4a (Twice!)

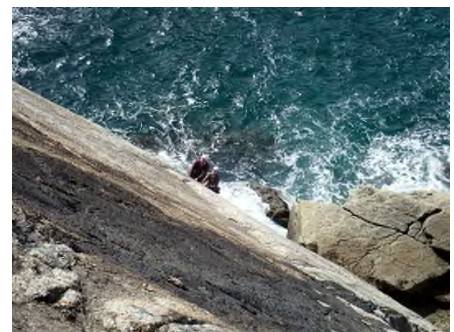
Finally we had our one full day with a good weather forecast! Realising it was now or never to take David to do Devil’s Slide, we set off early - too early... We peered over the midway abseil boulder, and realised we’d need to wait a bit if we wanted to reach the lowest point to belay. David was looking up and down the route nervously.



Devil’s Slide viewed from along the coast



A fellow camper joins us at the abseil point



David and Melinda on the Devil’s Slide first pitch

Once we’d headed down to sea level, Rich lead each of the 4 pitches to the top, while DLJ and I made slow but steady progress behind him. David was still uncertain about the friction of the rock, but kept going determinedly. I hung on behind, to take photos, and point out hand or foot holds if



Rich leading the 2nd pitch



David heads up the 3rd pitch



Big smiles at the top!

needed. DLJ was delighted to find that he even enjoyed the final pitch - as it involved climbing big cracks with hand and foot holds, rather than balancing on a slab!

For me, the day then took on an unexpected turn. While slowly working our way up Devil's Slide, I'd been studying it in detail. I'd hoped to persuade Rich to do the VS 4c corner crack route, Albion, after we'd finished, but Rich was feeling tired and didn't fancy it. I joked to him that I thought I now knew the Devil's Slide route well enough to lead it, so he offered me the chance to lead all 4



Take 2 - me leading pitch 2



Take 2 - bringing Rich across the 3rd traverse pitch



Tired but happy

itches myself. The 2 of us then abseiled back down, and did the route again, with me leading it all. As we all carried our heavy sacks on the fairly long walk back to the campsite, I'm not sure if it was me or David who felt most pleased about our achievements that day. 10 friendly guys and gals from the army's climbing club were among our fellow campers that week, and 2 of them had followed me and Rich up on our 2nd ascent. As they passed our tent upon their return, the lead climber called out to me, "Are you still stoked?! We'll you b\*\*\*\*y well should be!!" I chuckled into my dinner.

### Day 6 - Sunday - Climbing on Beaufort Buttress



Goats on the way to Beaufort Buttress

While David nursed a sore foot, and had a gentle walk, Rich and I headed over to Beaufort Buttress to do a few shorter, harder climbs. The forecast wasn't great, but the rain thankfully stayed away, and we shared the cliff with just 2 other climbers.

As well as the ever-curious seals - who think climbing is a great spectator sport - Lundy is home to goats, rare sheep, deer, wild ponies and highland cattle. So you never know what you'll see as you walk around.



Walking back with our climbing sacks, clambering across the now familiar walls and features, the Old Lighthouse was becoming an ever more welcome sight. Our tired legs knew the campsite was near!

### **Day 7 - Monday - A very wet walk**

As we knew from the forecast, today was extremely wet. DLJ retreated to the Tavern with his book, while Rich and I donned waterproofs to wander around the paths and buildings in the south of the island. We even located the elusive Pilot's Quay cliff, that we'd been searching for on our first day! We then started trying to pack up what we wouldn't need on Tuesday morning into kit bags, before joining DLJ in the Tavern for dinner.

### **Day 8 - Tuesday - Leading Horseman's Route / Heading Home**



Wouldn't you know it - departure day, and bright sunshine and blue skies!

We couldn't go too far, as we had to be down at the jetty fairly early to board the Oldenburg. Rich and I packed up our tent quickly, then headed back to Battery Point. Scrambling down to routes on the mainland cliff, we found yesterday's rain had left these soaked.

Looking across the sea channel, Horseman's Route, was in the sun and drying rapidly. Rich asked if I wanted to lead it, so that's what we did next.

The MS Oldenburg awaits...

Flushed with leading success again, I followed Rich into the campsite, where he'd spotted Boo - at the start of her own 3 day climbing visit. We didn't have time to chat for long, before grabbing ourselves ice cream tubs from the shop, and heading back down to the awaiting MS Oldenburg. Another Lundy trip was coming to an end.

Rich prefers going to different places all the time, but I already know I want to return to Lundy again. I'd go each year if I could. I just need to work on him. My best sales pitch is that it would be so much easier to remember how to locate those climbing cliffs if we went more regularly!