



Photo of Melinda, taken by Richard Kinsman on the Stob Ban and Mullach nan Coirean ridge

The Gwydyr Mountain Club Newsletter.

March 2022.

Edited: Chris Harris

I didn't get any contributions in February, so, sorry no newsletter for February.

Coming soon: (details on meets list on GMC website)

| | | |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 7 April | Thursday Walk: | Ruthin Castle to Denbigh Castle |
| 9 April | Saturday Walk: | Kinder Scout |
| 15-18 April | Hut Weekend: | Easter |
| 23-25 April | Hut Weekend: | St Georges meet |
| 13-15 May | Hut Weekend: | Scrambling Weekend |

Articles this month

- 1) Scottish Winter Meet, Fort William, 20-23rd February**
- 2) High House, Borrowdale Meet, 4-6th March**
- 3) Teggs Nose and Shuttlinghoe, Saturday Walk, 12th March**
- 4) Howgill Fells, Saturday walk, 19th March.**
- 5) New hut windows - operation.**

1) Scottish Winter Meet 20-23 February - organised by Chris harris

As always, the core dates of 20-23rd were flexible. Some came arrived earlier and some stayed longer. Of the week we really only had 1 really good day, the Monday, the rest of the time was a mixture of clag, wind and rain but with a mix of the Caledonian Canal, the train to Mallaig and the shops(and pubs) in Fort William, there was plenty to occupy the time at lower levels.

On the Monday Reg took a group up to the bothy at Loch Arkaig from the Ben Nevis Centre.



The rest of us took on the **Stob Ban and Mullach nan Coirean ridge**

This is a superb route taken from walkthehighlands and takes in 2 Munros, joined by a superb ridge giving amazing 360 degree views of many Munros, when it's clear, which thankfully, it was.



10 of us started up a relatively easy start up the valley from the bridge at Polldubh. The start of the snow was at about 450 metres, the point at which the terrain steepens towards the bealach. Lee had a wardrobe malfunction when his braces strap failed - sorted by a simple knot. The snow was soft with a bit of a crust, which meant regular sinking up to the knee. We lunched before we got to the bealach as the forecast was for rather brisk wind. As it happened it was relatively calm. From the bealach the final 1000ft ascent is on a slope of 45 degrees which called for care. However, the snow smoothed what is normally a rough rocky climb, finishing with a bit of a scramble. All worth while for the 360 degree views of the Nevis range and the Mamores and down to the coast. A ridge walk of about 2 miles to Mullach nan Coirean bagged us a second Munro in clear sunny conditions. The first 1000ft of descent was probably the fastest 1000ft of descent I have ever done. Soft snow on a steady slope made it so easy. We paid the price when we hit wet boggy grass - skiing skill has a benefit at this point. Then a short section through the woods back to the car park by 1730 (sunset) - perfect.

Final approach to Stob Ban



The Ridge looking back to Stob Ban.



From the bealach below Stob Ban

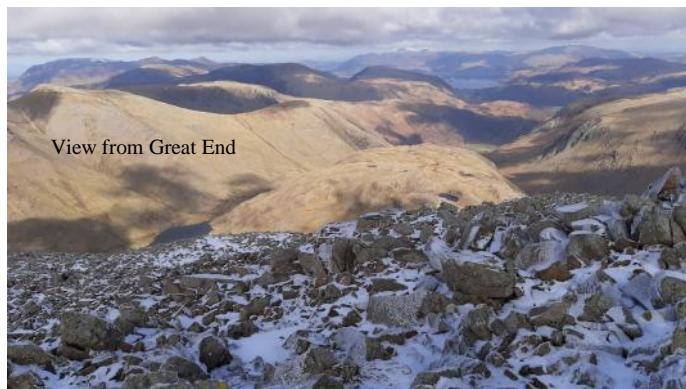
I did something I have not done before and that was to email the walkthehighlands route to the group before we went. This includes a free download of the gpx file. So most of the group had the route printed and some had it uploaded onto phones or gps. Great for those that wanted to follow the route on the map to improve their nav. skills.

2) Borrowdale Meet - Organised by Teresa Peddie



Teresa was unfortunately unable to attend but those that went are very grateful to her for arranging such fine weather in an amazing location with quirky accommodation. My previous memory at High House bunkhouse in Seathwaite was a rather wet weekend, and the newly installed water heater was not working so showers were a bit of a challenge. However, this time all was functioning well and the 2 potbellied stoves in the lounge and the bunkroom made it really cosy. Although Huw did manage to overfeed the bunkroom pot belly which led to a lot of noise, vibration and flames shooting

out of the side of the flue, all preceded by a fireball when I went to investigate.



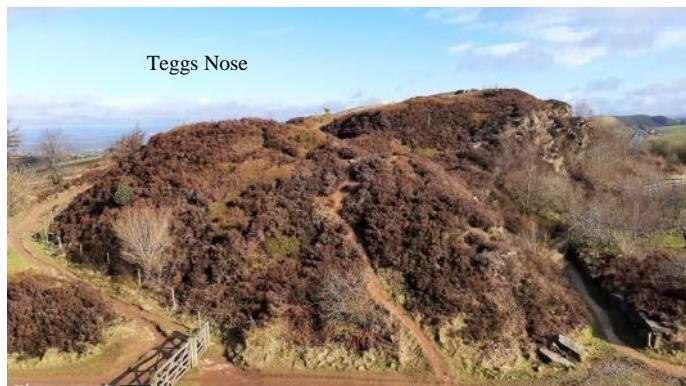
One great bonus of the location is the availability of parking in an area where it is very difficult to park, also there is a massive range of walks from the door. Those that managed to arrive early on the Friday walked a circuit to Styhead tarn.

On the Saturday we all walked the route to Styhead Tarn then past Sprinkling Tarn to Esk Hause.

At this point we split into two groups. Kev leading to Scafell Pike via Ill Crag and Broad Crag and back via the corridor route and I led a group to Great End , Allen Crags and Seathwaite Fell (all Wainwrights). The weather was kind, light breeze, sunny with excellent views. The 2 groups merged at Stockley bridge to finish the walk together and witnessed a group of wild water swimmers having a dip in the icy melt water below the bridge.

The weather on Sunday was equally fine. In the morning I managed to bag Esk Pike (Wainwright) while the main group took a route up Grains Gill, past Sprinkling Tarn and Styhead Tarn, returning by Styhead Gill to the hut.

3) Teggs Nose, Shuttinghoe - led by Steve Birch



A great route, led by Steve Birch. Starting at the Teggs nose reservoir car park we headed North up Teggs nose. Then circling round through ancient and new parts of Macclesfield forest we started the steady but gentle climb to the top of Shuttinghoe (the Matterhorn of Cheshire and Cheshire being a plain and the Matterhorn an Alp it's not surprising that Shuttinghoe is only 506m high but it gives views over Cheshire and Staffordshire.



No massive ascents but we managed 11.8 mls and nearly 3000ft ascent so quite a respectable walk. Dry weather but rather a strong breeze and as the route passed through the beer garden of The Hanging Gate pub we had to stop for refreshments. This was the point at which we heard Barb say something we did not expect " Sven and I can't stop at the pub !!!" Apparently they had to be somewhere else at 4 o'clock.

Navigation tip:

I can't remember who asked the question " what county are we in? " A discussion and check on the map was not very helpful due to county boundaries, national park and district boundaries on the map. I think it was Steve that solved it - "look at the wheelie bins! - all clearly marked Cheshire CC.



4) Howgill Fells - Led by Bill Morrison



Cautley Spout

From Bills sales pitch: *The Howgill Fells lie south of Tebay, nestling between the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales. They are a series of high rounded and rolling moorland hills broken up by steep river valleys. Much of the fells are covered with grassland with small stretches of heather and heath. These are fine, almost deserted hills offering good walking with a real feeling of wilderness. If we get clear skies, the views from the top are far reaching in all directions.*

The meet will take in the six highest tops in the range:

The Calf: 676m

Caulders: 674m

Fell Head: 640m

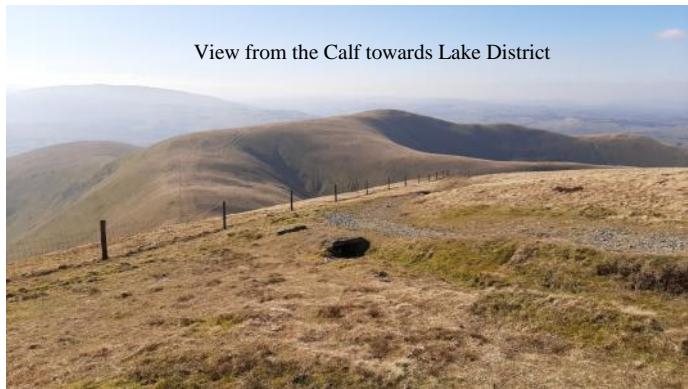
Yarlside: 639m

Bush Howe: 623m

Randygill Top: 620m

The Calf and Yarlside are both Marilyn's. The others qualify as Nuttalls.

We'll start at the Cross Keys Temperance Inn on the A683, about 5 miles past the town of Sedbergh.



View from the Calf towards Lake District



Steep descent from Simon's Seat



Meet at 8.00am – so an early start.

Our route starts by crossing the River Rawthey and then leads us eastwards along a glacial valley before climbing up past Cautley Spout waterfall (England's highest cascade waterfall above ground). This is a steep ascent but the path is quite good and stepped in places. We will reach the Calf plateau by taking the path along the edge of the Cautley Crags.

Turning east we make for Caulders, the first of our six fell tops. From there we turn north to the Calf itself, the highest point in the Howgills. After this we head north east first to Bush Howe and then onto Fell Head at about 8km from the start point. Next we go northward along the ridge to reach Simons Seat. This will take into the the centre of the Howgills.

From Simons Seat (587m) it is a steep descent east of around 250m down to the Langdale Valley. After crossing the beck we have a steep climb (250m) up onto Hazelgill Knott. Continuing east we descend into the Bowderdale Valley, cross the Bowderdale Beck and ascend up the shoulder of Yarlside to the summit. From here we turn north east and walk over Kensgrift before moving up onto Randygill Top, the last of our six tops. From here we descend via Stockless Top, following the beck off the fells and returning to the cars.

Total distance for the day is around 21km with about 1400m ascent in total. Much of the terrain undulates; the big ascents are climbing up onto the Calf plateau at the start and the accents of Hazelgill Knot, Yarlside and Randygill Top in the last section. So then, a fairly big day out.

On the day we cancelled Randygill top due to time and injury constraints arriving back at the carpark about 6pm. Probably a good idea as sunset was at 6.30.

Unfortunately we did not have time for an off the hill pint of sarsaparilla in the Temperance inn.

5) New hut windows



Finally the windows are fitted.
You've probably read too much about how they were fitted but please read how they operate.

They will slide as normal sash windows do but will also tilt. Tilt function is really only for cleaning, slide is only possible on the ground floor due to fireproofing secondary glazing upstairs.

OPERATION:

Slide:

Turn the brass (inner catches) 180 degrees and the window will slide upwards. If when closing, the catches do not align, the upper window may have dropped a little so push it up.

Tilt:

Probably only used for cleaning.
First, the window **must** be slid upwards so that it clears the bottom bead - **very important**. If this is not done, the frame could be badly damaged. Once clear, push the 2 silver bubbles towards the middle of the window and it will "fall" inwards.
Push back to close.



If you open any windows, make sure you close them before leaving the building.