



Looking towards Sgùrr an Lochain on South Glenshiel ridge

The Gwydyr Mountain Club Newsletter.

June 2022.

Edited: Chris
Harris

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

- 9 July Saturday Walk: Peak District Nine Edges
- 25 Jun-10 Jul Steve Birch on the Pennine Way
- 15-17 July Hut Weekend: Cycling Weekend
- 30 July Saturday walk: Moel Hebog
- 6 August Saturday Walk: Nantlle Ridge
- 5-7 August Hut Weekend: 50 Year Hut Anniversary

Articles this month

- 1) Walking the West Highland Way Barb and Sven Reynolds**
- 2) Glenshiel May Scottish trip - by Chris Harris**
- 3) Welsh 3000's 2022 - by Chris Harris**
- 4) 2008 GMC newsletter - Dave Antrobus**

1) Walking the West Highland Way Barb + Sven

West Highland Way 27th – 31st May

Friday 27th May: Milngavie – Conic Hill

We started on our way from the Premier Inn at Milngavie at 0800, through some nice countryside warming us up for the route ahead. After a downpour the evening before, we had gorgeous sunshine to set with. 7.5 miles in, we made a very welcome break at the first pub stop of the journey, the Beech Tree Inn, which was lovely. We sat in the garden and enjoyed a late breakfast of a can of Innis and Gunn and a bag of crisps. Onward another 5 miles to Drymen for a good meal. The Clachan Inn was our preference but it is very small and it was rammed. With fear of taking out an old dear eating as we squeezed past with rucksacks, we had drinks and refreshments at the Drymen Inn. From there it was a lovely walk through Drymen Forest to the start of the climb up Conic Hill, which would be home for the night. We struggled to find a flat area out of the wind that had built up, but we managed to find a spot with the most wonderful view west across the Loch to wake up to. 18 miles completed.





**Saturday 28th
May: Conic
Hill –
Inversnaid**

After a couple of coffees while admiring the view, we packed up and began the decent down Conic Hill and into Balmaha for some breakfast. We then stuck a midge net on Tom Weir and took the obligatory photo.

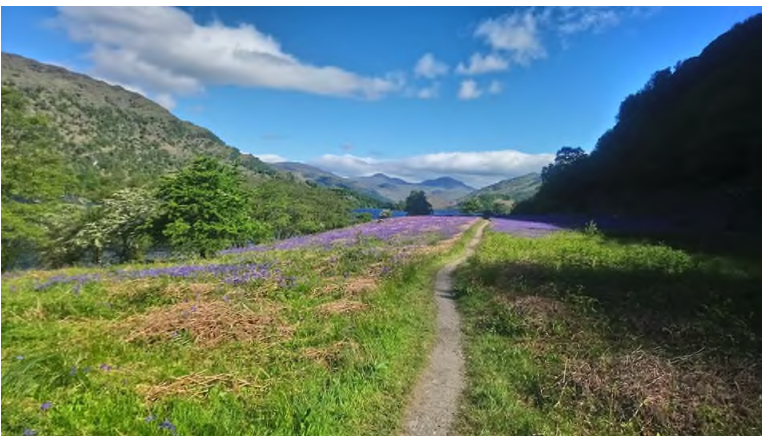
We headed off and made good progress for 7 miles along Loch Lomond, enjoying the views and the wildlife. Then we stumbled on the Clansman and its beautiful views along the Loch. We took our boots off and stayed there longer than we should have. Because we were really enjoying relaxing outside in the sun, we did not feel we wanted to order any meals until just before we left.

At this time the queue was so large we decided to persist onwards and manage with our own supplies. After reluctantly leaving the Clansman we soon came across an honesty box and we were tempted by a cheese butty, a flapjack and some sweeties which kept our strength up. We then passed the remote bothy at Rowchoish and

added that to our list of places to return to, then we hit the renowned tough section along the Loch from Rowardennan. It was a long hard slog to reach Inversnaid, which was stunning, particularly with the waterfall, we hobbled on to find somewhere to make camp. We found a great location on the banks of the Loch, close to the boathouse, where we drank the emergency JD and coke and were thankful for the cheese butty purchase. Not as much progress as we had hoped with just 14 miles completed due to the challenging terrain. A nice place to set up camp to sit and soak up the views as our feet paddled in the loch to relieve the miles. Until the midges arrived then we went to bed.



Sunday 29th May: Inversnaid to Tyndrum



The struggle continued as the path remained challenging for another few miles, so progress was slow. We met a group who were aiming to complete the Way across 48 hours, having left Fort William the previous morning. I didn't feel I had a right to moan at our plight. We were delighted to see so many wild goats along the way and the sun shone so we plodded on slowly but happily. We were very pleased to finally reach the end of the Loch and we knew that some much needed refreshments at Beinglas campsite were getting

closer. We couldn't stay too long as we would have needed a mortgage at the bar, this place got the prize for the most expensive pint along the Way. En route to Beinglas we discovered another bothy, which we explored and made a note of, somebody knew we were arriving as they had engraved our surname on the door. We were pretty tired when we did eventually reach Beinglas, but apart from the bar prices, we really needed to push on to Tyndrum as we had booked our only accommodation for just one night of home comforts. It seemed awful being so close to the Drovers and not calling in.... It was lovely to arrive at the Tyndrum Inn and have a shower and wash the very few clothes we had – as we were carrying all of our own gear, we were travelling as light as possible! **19 miles completed.**

Monday 30th May: Tyndrum – Kingshouse



We reluctantly left our comfy beds and with a full Scottish breakfast under our belts, eaten while listening to American tourists complaining about the lack of a nearby pharmacy, we headed off at 9.30 am for the next leg. 6 miles in, we stumbled on the Bridge of Orchy Hotel (yes we know there is a theme developing here!). Well after all, it was our holiday and why not enjoy it to the full? It was 5 o'clock somewhere, although only just 11 o'clock in BOO, but they kindly let us have a pint, but we were getting some odd looks from the coffee drinkers. We

plodded on to our next stop, the (very inviting) Inverornan Hotel, where we planned to have lunch. Unfortunately, the hotel didn't have staff to provide meals, so we settled for a pint and a piece of cake. The highlight of that pub visit was the arrival of a stag and deer, which just started munching on the grass very close to where we were sitting, it was just an amazing site. For wild deer we thought this was unusual for them to be so close, until a car pulled up. A local gent got out armed with carrots, the deer were all very interested then. Again, we stayed there for longer than we should but we were really enjoying the company. We pushed on eventually for the next 10 miles, seeing some more wild deer along the way and arrived at the Kingshouse Hotel at 7.30 pm and ate pie, crisps and had a couple of pints. We set up camp at Kingshouse, with the most amazing views. 19 miles completed.

Tuesday 31st Kingshouse to Fort William



The weather forecast had predicted a lot of mist in the morning so we were really pleased to wake up to continued beautiful sunshine. We packed up and set off at about 8 am. Hanging around too long was not an option as we had Devil's Staircase ahead and the midges were waking up. We loved walking through Glen Coe and the views at the top of Devil's Staircase were just breath taking. We were concerned that we wouldn't have a view but

we needed have worried. We ate our emergency pies purchased at the Green Welly while enjoying the view. It was a very long but enjoyable descent into Kinlochleven for lunch and we trotted the extra half mile to the recommended MacDonald Hotel Bothy Bar, which we were gutted to find was closed when we arrived. My

feet were pretty sore at this point, I have a blister covering the pad of my toe which was painful. We decided to rest in the grounds of the hotel, admiring the view of the Pap of Glencoe, and Sven performed surgery on my blister to relieve the pressure. Gas and air would have been helpful at this point but anyway, I was bandaged up and then we hobbled back to the Tailrace Inn for something to eat.



We were now 16 miles from the end and we pondered if we had the energy to complete it all in one push. We decided to give it a go aware of the changing forecasted weather. 7 miles before the end it started to batter down with rain which actually continued on for hours. We arrived at FW at 8.30 pm, bedraggled, wet through with very sore feet and we didn't feel a bit like celebrating. We tried to take a selfie at the finishing point but rain was playing havoc with the touchscreen. We headed to the van, got changed into dry clothes poured ourselves a very big drink and promptly fell asleep. The next morning we hobbled back into town for the obligatory finish photos. 24 miles completed



We both loved the whole experience, there are a couple of things we would do differently with hindsight but overall, I think we were reasonably well prepared and brought with us everything we neededand not very much that we didn't need. I found it hard at first carrying the weight but I did adjust to it. I would definitely wild camp if I did it again, there are so many stunning spots to set up at. It really is a beautiful walk, the magnificence of the scenery and the wild life were the highlights. We very much enjoyed all of the watering holes we came across along the way. We were also very fortunate with the weather, most days we walking in short sleeves. It could have been a very different experience if luck had not been on our side with the weather.

2) Glenshiel May Scottish trip - by Chris Harris

There are 32 munros on the OS explorer map 414 which means that it is great value for any GMC group. Well done Teresa for choosing Glenshiel House, well situated for most of them.

Accommodation was limited but the lucky ones were Teresa, Bryn, Chris, Janet, Helen, Glenn, Hew, Angela, Mark, Laura, John "Simmo", Steve B, Dave E, Sonja, Sue, Nicky

Peaks bagged by various people on different days:

South Glenshiel Ridge: Creag a' Mhaim, Druim Shionnach, Aonach Air Chrith, Maol Chinn-dearg, Sgùrr an Doire Leathain, Sgùrr an Lochain, Creag nan Dàmh

Basically one 18 mile walk with 6200ft of ascent but the quickest way to bag 7 Munros in a day.

Sisters of Kintail: Sgùrr na Ciste Duibhe, Sgùrr na Càrnach, Sgùrr Fhuaran

Brothers of Kintail: Sàileag, Sgùrr a Bhealaich Dheirg, Aonach Meadhoin

Ciste Dubh

Simmo also did The Saddle and Sgurr na Sgine and Beinn Sgritheall solo.

While on Sgurr na Sgine summit he met a couple he races against in North Wales. What are the odds?

Over the week I managed to collect 8 ticks and Janet 4 ticks.

Mark and Laura and Steve Birch had bikes and managed a good variety of rides.

There was a trip to Sandaig Beach where Gavin Maxwell used to live with his pet otters which inspired him to write Ring of Bright Water.

Some chose a day on the beach at Sandaig Beach, Nicky of course went wild swimming, the rest of us did some wild paddling. Many managed a pint in the nearby (to the beach) Dun Brewing brewery opposite the Broch at Dun Trodden, it's in the middle of nowhere but the beer was excellent and much cheaper than our local at Glenshiel.

Thursday there was Garden Tea party with freshly baked cakes, fizz flags etc. organised by Sue, Nicky and Sonja to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee

Friday night, Indian takeaway from Lochalsh, organised - The local pub was struggling to find staff so a takeaway from Lochalsh nobly transported by Dave Edwards was preferable to potentially waiting forever for food at the pub.



Sandaig Beach



The first Brother - Aonach Meadhoin



South Glenshiel Ridge



Sunset on "The Sisters" from Glenshiel House

3) 2022 Welsh 3000's by Chris Harris

Assumptions:

Sitting on Crib Goch " *well it can only get better*" - Wrong

"*MWIS is always pessmistic*" - very Wrong

"*We can make time running down the railway track*" - Wrong, the wind was behind and all our energy was used in trying to slow down.

"*We're making good time*" - Wrong, we were moving at a good pace but all the pauses waiting for the squalls to blow through added up.

There were only 3 competitors for the Welsh 300's trophies this year, me, Katie Harris and John "Simmo" Simpson. With only David L-J organising and Janet Harris assisting support they somehow managed to look after us without problem.

The walk plan, much tried and tested : up at 4am, quick breakfast and drop off at Pen - y - Pass before 5. We arrived at 0455, so far so good. That's where it started to fall apart. It took 15 minutes before the heavy rain stopped and we were able to start the ascent to Crib Goch which was well hidden by cloud. A blustery rainy ascent of Crib Goch meant we arrived at top a bit late.

The three of us set off with wind blasting us from the left side and grim visibility. The wind speed on the mini cols was such that we had to wait for a lull before we dared proceed. The rock was saturated and not very user friendly. Katie and I expected John to rapidly disappear from sight but a speedy traverse was not an option. As we (Katie and me, John was well ahead by now) approached Garnedd Ugain the rain turned to hail. Snowdon was reasonably calm and we actually climbed the man-made summit thingy for a photo. Met office was recording 32 mph winds at the time we were there which gives you an idea of what calm meant that day.

In summary. Winds mostly 40mph with stronger gusts and the weather got worse as the day progressed. At Glyder Fawr we saw a blacker than normal cloud heading our way and ducked behind rocks to shelter. This was the point where we made the decision, with very little debate, to finish at Ogwen. We were losing so much time fighting the wind and waiting for squalls to pass through, it would have been midnight before we finished. The temperature at midday was icy so late afternoon onward would be worse.

We bypassed Tryfan and came down to the carpark at 4.20. Out of the seven peaks we did, Crib Goch was the only one that we did not get blasted by hail. At least we had a well earned pint in the Tyn -y.

John was wearing running gear and he could not maintain enough speed against the wind to keep his body temperature up so unfortunately he had to drop out at Ogwen as well.



Pretty grim on Snowdon



Getting worse on Glyder Fawr



A clear spell



Looks easy but it was into gale force wind

4) 2008 GMC newsletter - Dave Antrobus

A couple of months ago Dave Antrobus gave me a CD with Number 24 Newsletter for the GMC dated Summer 2008.

This was the year I joined so it was interesting to see what I just missed.

I've pdf'd it to send out with this newsletter